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*STUDIES IN ADULT EDUCATION*

RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

## STUDIES IN ADULT EDUCATION

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RURAL ADULT EDUCATION. *By Benson Y. Landis and John D. Willard.*

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

# RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

BY

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## FOREWORD

As a national and widespread interest, adult education is a discovery of the last few years, but it has been largely centered about urban people and agencies. Yet it is interesting to note that Washington's idea of diffusing information to farmers belonged to the same period as Franklin's educational projects for artisans. Down through the years the idea spread and flourished in many directions. There was a time, for example in the "'50's," when it was the accepted practice for men high in public esteem to give addresses of distinction at the New England "cattle shows." It was in such an address that Emerson used the phrase "the man with the hoe" before the picture was painted or the poem written. This book traces briefly but accurately the story of the flowering of popular education for farmers to its present status as the largest enterprise in adult education in the nation, measured in terms of money expended, numbers of persons professionally employed, and people "reached."

As a description of the amazing variety of agencies and of methods in use in helping rural people to continue their education beyond the days of schooling, the book is of distinct value. One soon becomes convinced, however, in reading this volume, that there should soon emerge out of this multitude of activities, some sort of system, not too rigid, and yet something coherent and really planned, that will both save wastes of money and energy and give rural folk the benefit of opportunities based upon sound theory and effective practice. The chapters dealing with needs of this sort and with suggestions for integration deserve special study.

This study has a significance quite beyond that of one of a rapidly growing library on adult education. It is almost platitude to repeat the current phrases that express the sense of crisis in world affairs. To ignore the fact however is singularly inept on the part of any who care for the fate of peoples. We have often placed all too great a burden upon education as a panacea, yet we can not get away from it. We are inclined these days to lose our faith in democracy, yet the democratic tide flows on. And we keep coming back to the old faith both in the ultimate triumph of the democratic impulse and in the educative process continued through life as the indispensable accompaniment of an efficient democracy. But we are only beginning to see that the world can not live half slave to illiteracy of any sort and half free in terms of personalities released from superstition, prejudice, ignorance, and tradition. If we build systems of continuing education adequate for the urban half of the world we must simultaneously build systems of continuing education adequate for the rural half of the world.

The present volume is the first one to display the range and nature of what we are trying to do for our own rural people. But one can easily gain from it the inspiring suggestion that what is good here is good elsewhere—not always in practical method but in fundamental philosophy of a satisfying rural world civilization. Europe has its own long experience and unique contributions in this same field. All the other continents are stirring with the fruitful notion of mass education. We are on the eve of a new approach to the task of reconstructing the rural life of the world. And surely the master word is continuing education.

KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD

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## INTRODUCTION

THE purpose of this book is to interpret important programs of rural adult education in the United States and to suggest measures for their improvement. Rural America has over 53,000,000 inhabitants. It has the largest adult education organization in the nation and other extensive enterprises. Information about adult education in rural communities has been scattered and poorly interpreted. It is our hope that this book will contribute to an understanding of the work of rural adult educators.

We record here the results of a research project of the American Association for Adult Education, which has been carried on by means of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Experiments in rural adult education were begun in two Michigan counties, early in 1928, in cooperation with the Michigan State College. Later in the year the Association assigned John D. Willard as research associate to study rural adult education throughout the United States. Professor Willard continued his studies up to his death in December, 1931. By that time a large part of the information for this study had been gathered and some of the manuscript had been written. Soon after Professor Willard's death, Benson Y. Landis undertook the completion of the study.

At first it was expected that a thorough survey could be undertaken, but there was such a scarcity of pertinent data and such a lack of uniformity in statistical information that an exhaustive study was out of the question. Therefore the most that could be attempted was an interpretation of a variety of projects. Obviously, not all work under

## INTRODUCTION

way could be studied. Following our descriptions of the more extensive programs and of illustrations of significant enterprises, we give our ideas regarding the extension and improvement of rural adult education in the United States.

In the United States the term adult education has only recently been widely used, although adult learning is as old as the race. Some of the recent organized efforts have emphasized "need and desire, not age, as fundamental in education," and have therefore brought new elements of theory and practice into the educational world.

Adult education in rural America illustrates to some extent the diversity of aims, methods and organization found in the adult education movement throughout the world. The educational efforts in rural America are not unrelated to the strivings in many parts of the world on the part of adults for continuous personal growth and adjustment. Many of the cultural and technical forces that affect urban life influence rural life too.

The term adult education is as variously defined as the term education itself. Among the objectives of adult education as defined by those identified with the movement are: to improve skills and knowledge; to promote tolerance and open-mindedness; to develop democracy; to improve the social order; to integrate personality; to develop a philosophy of life; to promote social efficiency; to give opportunities for self-expression; to develop capacity for the enjoyment of human experience; to broaden interests. Among the methods in use are lectures, discussions, seminars, experimentation, research, self-directed study, correspondence, visual instruction and dramatics. Perhaps the safest generalization is that adult education refers to all purposeful and sustained efforts by adults to increase knowledge, skill or appreciation, usually with the understanding that full-time graduate or professional study is not included; and that adult education is based on man's ability to continue the learning process throughout life.

In spite of the achievements of men and women at all ages, the impression has been general and persistent that substantial learning is possible only during childhood and youth. The studies by Edward L. Thorndike described in *Adult Learning* dispel any doubts of the ability of adults to learn. Possibly the richest learning abilities come when experience has given maturity to judgment, and when values have become definable. The need for adult education grows with every addition to our store of knowledge, with every new force harnessed for the use of man, with every new aspiration for a finer social order, with every maladjustment that comes in a changing society.

No wholly satisfying definition is possible because the term has been used to designate so many widely different kinds of activities, sometimes with the implication of excluding other types. Older forms are expanding to include new programs. Educational movements of long standing are becoming recognized as in essence adult education. New movements have been developing to meet newly discovered desires and needs. In general, the newer definitions are more in terms of goals to be achieved than of agencies. Goals are stated more in terms of abilities, attitudes and satisfactions than in terms of particular forms and fields of learning, or of courses completed.

Finally, it perhaps needs to be emphasized that the majority of the people of the world are rural. At least half of the world's population, a billion persons, live by farming; and many more are in rural areas closely related to agriculture. The concentrations of people in cities in the eastern United States and in Europe are exceptional situations. The highly urbanized areas of the world are much more than offset in numbers by the village and open-country populations of the continents of the world. Illiteracy is throughout the world more a problem of the country than of the city. Rural isolation creates great difficulties for all forms of education. Leaders in adult edu-

tion the world over recognize that many of their great problems are in rural areas.

. . . . .

Many persons in many states have contributed information for this book. Throughout the text we make mention a number of those whose experience and reports have particularly helped us. It would be impossible, however, to compile a complete list of those who have supplied data. Acknowledgments are here made to those who have read the manuscript or one of the chapters. Julia Wright Merrill, American Library Association, read and revised Chapter III on "Library Services." Mabel Carney, Teachers College, Columbia University, made useful suggestions for Chapter IV on "The Public Schools." C. B. Smith and Grace E. Frysinger, both of the Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture, furnished considerable recent data for Chapter V on "Agricultural Extension." Chapter VI on "College and University Extension" was read by Chester D. Snell, Dean of the University Extension Division, the University of Wisconsin, and L. R. Alderman, Specialist in Adult Education, United States Office of Education. Assistance in the preparation of Chapter VII on "Parent Education" was given by Flora E. Thurston, Director of the National Council of Parent Education. Earl C. Taylor, formerly Dean of the Graduate School of the North Carolina State College, read Chapter IX on "Farm Organizations." Allen Eaton, Russell Sage Foundation, and W. H. Stacy, Iowa State College, read Chapter X on "The Cultural Arts." Chapter XI on "Radio Programs" was read by Margaret Harrison, formerly of Teachers College, Columbia University; Levering Tyson, Director of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education; and Morse Salisbury, Chief of the Radio Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Mrs. Olive D. Campbell, Director of the John C. Campbell Folk

School, and Chester A. Graham, Principal of Ashland College, supplied data for Chapter XII on "Folk Schools." The entire manuscript was read by Kenyon L. Butterfield, International Missionary Council; Edmund de S. Brunner, Teachers College, Columbia University; Mary L. Ely, Editor of the *Journal of Adult Education*; and James Earl Russell, Chairman of the Executive Board, American Association for Adult Education. Harriet Van Wyck, Librarian of the Association, assisted in the preparation of the bibliography. Morse A. Cartwright, Executive Director of the Association, gave throughout the entire project the interest and the coöperation which made its completion possible.



## PART I

### RURAL AMERICA: AN INTERPRETATION



## CHAPTER I

# THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RURAL LIFE IN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION

*Rural America must understand the city. . . . The city must understand the country.*—EDMUND DE S. BRUNNER.

"CULTIVATORS of the earth are the most valuable citizens," Thomas Jefferson once insisted. On the other hand, an eminent scholar is once reported to have said that the story of civilization is one of cities dragging unwilling countrysides to progress. However, most educators and social scientists who have given thought to the matter seem to be of the opinion that rural and urban life both have advantages and disadvantages; that each experience brings with it certain understandings and emphases; that at the present stage of American culture, controversies in regard to superiority are fruitless. It is from this point of view that we approach our attempt to interpret a variety of social data bearing on the significance of rural life in American civilization. The purpose of Part I is to put into brief compass the main characteristics and the recent developments of rural life in the United States, as the setting for our consideration of the major enterprises of adult education.

### THE INFLUENCES OF THE FRONTIER

"The dominant fact" in American culture, according to certain historians and observers, has been the frontier. For example, Frederick Jackson Turner in his classic monograph on *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* contends that the frontier has been the most im-

portant element in our culture. Very recently Percy H. Boynton, studying American literature, reiterates Professor Turner's thesis in *The Rediscovery of the Frontier*. Isaiah Bowman says: "The whole of America is a land of pioneering tradition." With the frontier we associate such as the rugged individualism of pioneering; the family unit of economy based on a comparatively self-provident agriculture; cultural isolation; a relatively simple social organization; rigid neighborhood controls over personal conduct. So numerous and pervasive have been the effects of the frontier on both our rural and our urban life that they almost defy description.

Rugged individualism is still so evident in most of American industry, and isolationist tendencies still so largely determine our international relationships, that the weighty influence of our frontier heritage at least is noticeable at every turn. Many of our institutions which originated in an agrarian era undergo great stress and strain in attempting to adjust to the machine age. For the frontier has poured its surplus population into the towns and cities, and today large numbers of urban men and women continue to struggle with the clashes between rural and urban values and ways of life. Thus our national life becomes a colorful fusion of a simple frontier heritage with a complex urban culture that is supported by machines and technology.<sup>1</sup> One of the important questions for educators, therefore, becomes that of the preservation of the peculiar values of a rural heritage in a modern, industrialized state. Throughout this entire book we concern ourselves a good deal with the relations of city and country, their influences upon each other, and the implications of these relationships and influences for adult education.

#### THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE

The land resources of the United States are diverse and tremendous. Soils range from rock and pure sand to the

finest loams. There are areas with frost every month of the year and others with no frost in any month. There are places with comparatively little rainfall and others with an abundance. Plant life ranges from palm to spruce, from blue grass to cactus. These differences in natural environment affect the social life and institutions of the people.

The 1930 census reported a rural population of 53,820,223. The Census Bureau defines the rural population as that resident in incorporated places having up to 2,500 persons and in unincorporated places. The census divides the rural population into two groups: (1) rural, farm; (2) rural, non-farm. For 1930 the division was as follows:

## RURAL POPULATION

Rural, Farm . . . . .	30,157,513
Rural, Non-Farm . . . . .	<u>23,662,710</u>
Total . . . . .	53,820,223

In 1930 the rural population was 43.8 per cent of the total population; in 1880, by contrast, it was 71.4 per cent of the total. The census of 1920 was the first to show the rural group in a minority. The degree of urbanization of the United States may be further illustrated by another set of figures given in the 1930 census. These reveal that in 1790 there were in the United States six cities with 8,000 or more inhabitants; by 1860 there were 141 such cities; by 1930 there were 1208.

Between 1920 and 1930 there was a decline of 159,000 in the number of farms operated. Between these years, too, the rural non-farm population increased rapidly—at a greater rate than that of the nation as a whole—and the farm population decreased steadily. During the depression years of 1930–32, the farm population increased, according to the annual estimates made by the Division of Farm Population and Rural Life of the United States Department of Agriculture. The estimates are based upon sys-

tematic reports from all parts of the country. Increases in the farm group are accounted for by the fact that the farms have become a refuge for many persons unemployed. Numerous observers and widely traveled reporters for the agricultural press say the process is still going on. Perhaps most important of all to consider in connection with population data is the recent transition of rural America from a majority to a minority group. But its leaders, accustomed to the ways of majorities, have not yet learned the techniques which minorities must use for the advancement of their interests.

#### THE REVOLUTIONS WITHIN AGRICULTURE

In *The Rise of American Civilization*, Charles A. and Mary R. Beard write of "the absorption of agriculture into the industrial vortex . . . sustained by capitalism, science and machinery." The most far-reaching changes in rural life during the past fifty years have probably been its mechanization, its commercialization, and the rapid advances in the application of the physical and chemical sciences to agricultural production.

The rapid absorption of certain of the sciences by farmers was totally unforeseen by the agricultural educators of a generation ago. Reviewing the developments of rural life between 1917 and 1927, C. J. Galpin of the United States Department of Agriculture said that "the great characteristic" was "the indoctrination of the American farmer and the farm women in the science of agriculture and the principles of homemaking. . . . Science has entered as an habitual guide. . . ."

There are many evidences of mechanization and of the social influences of inventions. The agricultural censuses of 1920 and 1930 tell the story of the steady expansion in the use of all sorts of machines. In 1920, 30.7 per cent of the farms had automobiles; in 1930 the proportion was 58.0 per cent. In 1920, seven per cent of the farm homes

had electric lights; in 1930 the figure was 13.4 per cent. During the depression some machinery has been abandoned, but it is not known to what extent.

So rapidly have science and machinery affected farm production that H. R. Tolley, until recently an economist of the Department of Agriculture, reported in the course of a technical investigation that "the physical production per agricultural worker in the United States doubled between 1870 and 1920." During the same time there was a very rapid increase in the amount of power used per worker. "Efficiency in farming as measured by physical production per worker has been increasing at about the same rate as efficiency in manufacturing and mining but not so rapidly as in railroading." Thus there is "technological unemployment" in rural as well as urban life. In 1932 a farm woman illustrated it well in an appeal to an educator: "Tell me what to do about my 'surplus' boys and girls. I have four grown children and only one is regularly employed. They cannot go to the city for jobs as they once did. There is nothing here for them to do. Our income is not large enough to support a large family."

The tendencies toward mechanization and commercialization have made for public discussion of the possibilities of large scale farming. The question is seriously raised, "Can the little farmer survive?" It has been estimated by the agricultural service department of the United States Chamber of Commerce that large scale farming now accounts for six per cent of the farm production in the country. Predictions are freely made that it will be largely extended, that the methods of mass production common in manufacturing will be used in agriculture. The success of the corporation farm depends upon the possibility of reducing production costs per acre considerably below those that prevail on the farm which maintains but one family. But the extensive investigations made by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States indicate that large scale

farming results in exactly the same financial returns as farming carried on by separate families. Not all the methods of mass production developed in manufacturing can be taken over into farming. According to the 1930 agricultural census, fewer farms in the United States were being operated by managers than ten years previously. This is probably evidence that large scale farming was not on the increase during the decade. Discussion of large scale farming also centers around the social values inherent in the family units as compared with the industrialized unit. Farm leaders generally are opposed to efforts at industrialization; they hold to the social values of the unit operated by a family. But there are technicians and other well-informed persons who believe that large scale farms, whether owned by individuals or by corporations, are destined to increase. Land values are low; skilled management is apparently available; in the wheat belt and in certain other areas there appear to be favorable conditions. One of the most interesting projects is "Fairway Farms" in Montana which is a non-profit corporation established for experimental purposes. It has demonstrated that the larger the unit of operation, the lower the cost of production.

#### RACIAL GROUPS

Rural America is not so homogeneous as is frequently supposed. The population springs from many racial stocks. There are today many coherent racial groups, something of racial islands in the midst of a racially composite sea.

By far the largest racial group is the Negro. One of the most important facts about the Negroes' relations to rural life is that whereas in 1920, 66 per cent of them were living in rural territory, in 1930 only 56.3 per cent were there. The exodus to town and city and the migration northward to the city are two of the more familiar social phenomena of the post-war period. To what extent Negroes have been

returning to rural life during 1930-32 as a result of unemployment is not known. The total Negro population was in 1930, 11,891,143. Of this number, 6,697,230 were rural. The rural Negro population was further divided into 4,680,523 on farms; and 2,016,707, rural non-farm. The special needs of the Negro in rural life loom large in any consideration of adult education. Educational neglect of the Negro is too patent to require any elaboration in this book.

In 1930, foreign born white persons constituted about five per cent of the total rural population. This figure represented only a slight increase compared with 1920. The most extensive information available on rural immigrants is the study made by Edmund de S. Brunner of those engaged in agriculture, in *Immigrant Farmers and Their Children*. The foreign born farming population now numbers around 1,500,000 persons, and is less than half the entire rural foreign born population. According to the analysis of the latest census data available, the Germans were the largest nationality group among foreign born farmers, with almost a fourth of the entire number. The next largest were the Swedes and Norwegians. If the Danes are added to the Swedes and Norwegians, the entire Scandinavian group almost equaled the Germans. Other countries furnishing considerable numbers were Canada, Great Britain, Russia, Austria. Small proportions came from Italy, Poland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland and Switzerland. Immigrant farmers are thus mainly North European. They have settled mainly in the Middle West, New England and the Middle Atlantic States.

There are other racial groups in farming areas, for example over 300,000 Indians, and about 100,000 Jews. A study entitled *A New England Town in Transition*, by Charles G. Chakerian, points out that one of the main difficulties is the relation between immigrants and native born. "The social distances which separate the different

elements of the population are pronounced and significant." Rural life has its problems of cultural and racial conflict and coöperation.

#### RELIGIOUS BACKGROUNDS

One of the important interpretations of this aspect of our rural—and urban—life is Thomas C. Hall's *The Religious Background of American Culture*. His thesis is that the most important strain in the religious elements of American culture is "the English dissenting tradition." Continental Protestantism, Anglicanism, Catholicism are also found in American rural life, but the churches with the largest memberships throughout the country, and which have influenced rural life the most, are the "middle-of-the-road" Protestant groups which trace their lineage directly or indirectly to the British dissenting movements.

Religion in rural life has been largely one of "crisis" rather than one of "culture." By a religion of crisis we mean one which has provided escapes from present existence or which has ministered mainly to persons in critical situations. It has emphasized otherworldliness, has opposed new intellectual movements, has encouraged patient endurance with the social order or with nature. On the other hand, there are evidences of the spread of a religion of culture, emphasizing the importance of human potentiality, practical works for human betterment, and education. It has been aware of the world and its circumstances, has been concerned with the creation of a new society, has made efforts at correcting economic evils. Certain religious bodies represent practical syntheses of these emphases, but as yet the religion of crisis predominates.

It is commonly said that in rural areas there is more allegiance to the church than in urban, but the 1926 federal religious census disclosed that church constituencies were 52 per cent of the rural population and 58 per cent of the urban. Probably rural migrants to the cities account

for much of the urban strength, but it is evident that the forces making for disaffection from organized religion have been powerful in rural as well as urban centers. In 1928, Carl R. Hutchinson interviewed 200 dairy farmers in a township of Northern Illinois and classified them as follows in regard to evidences of interest in the churches in their localities: "Strong for the church, 34 per cent; moderately for the church, 22.5 per cent; weak in endorsement of the church, 36 per cent; neutral 7 per cent; opposed .5 per cent."

According to the 1926 religious census, one-fifth of the Roman Catholic local churches and larger percentages of most Protestant churches were located in rural territory. Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara of the Diocese of Great Falls has estimated that Catholic education is still more largely urban, rural Catholic schools constituting about 10 per cent of the total. In general, the churches of the open country have been declining in numbers and influence—church life is more definitely centering in villages.

#### AGRICULTURAL VILLAGES

"Neither grass nor hay" is a term once used to describe the American village, neither rural nor urban being the implication. In fact the term "rurban" has been aptly applied to it, because it contains both rural and urban elements. The agricultural village, which for a long time was a great unknown in rural life, has recently been adequately interpreted through the extensive village studies of the Institute of Social and Religious Research, made under the direction of Edmund de S. Brunner. Dr. Brunner's own concise summaries of these studies are as follows:

Villages occupy a key position in the structure of the nation, and especially in the structure of rural America. . . . Main Street has an importance beyond its size. To the city, it is representative of rural America; to the farmer, it is the interpreter of the city. Both need it; neither fully understands it. . . .

Whether the countryman journeys to the city or simply deals with urban facilities for commerce, credit or transportation, it is largely through the gateway of the village that he gains contact with the city. To one-third of America, the village represents the outpost of urban civilization. Conversely, the urbanite reaches rural America through the village. The great banks rely upon their village correspondents for information. The house that sells to a national market . . . rests content in its efforts to reach rural America if the village department store carries its line.

Agricultural villages are more nearly 100 per cent American than either the cities or the open country. . . . Another important characteristic . . . is the preponderance of females. . . . There were only 94.5 males to every 100 females. . . . One-seventh of the women in these villages are widows. . . . Another distinguishing characteristic . . . is the high proportion of old people. . . . These facts have important sociological implications. The number of older people, and the preponderance of females, especially the larger number of widows, make for conservatism. . . . The older people have . . . a peculiar economic interest in preserving the *status quo* in the village. . . . These people have lived their lives. They now ask of the world, not opportunity, but peace and quiet. Hence they are out of sympathy with youth. They see no reason for expanding the school curriculum or building an up-to-date school. They ask from the church assurance and sympathy, not service. . . . Desired improvements cannot be "sold" to this group by the usual promotional methods. Educators and clergymen face a difficult problem in dealing with this group. The wonder is not that this is so but that in the face of this condition villages have made as much progress as they have.

Villages represent a tremendous experience in self-government. . . . More than half of the suggestion as to bettering the village received in house-to-house censuses dealt with public improvements and relied upon village government for their accomplishment. . . . There was no well-integrated plan for caring for public health in the villages studied. Unlike education and religion, the health interest has not come to a high degree of organization in rural America.

The studies of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends indicated that by 1930 village population

was stabilizing, and that the village was more than ever the "capital" of rural America.

#### INDUSTRIAL VILLAGES IN RURAL AREAS

Also important are the industrial villages which are in rural territory but not of rural life. One village out of every four or five, and about one person out of every twelve classed as rural by the United States census have no close relationships to agriculture at all. These villages, too, have been interpreted by Dr. Brunner in his book *Industrial Village Churches*. They are engaged in textile manufacture, in lumbering and paper manufacture, in coal or iron mining. They have few contacts with farmers and have functions altogether different from the agricultural villages, which mainly provide service stations for farmers and, to a lesser extent, homes for old persons retired from the farm.

Out of about 18,000 incorporated and unincorporated villages having 250 to 2,500 population, roughly 4,000, with a population of around 4,000,000, are industrial. Intensive studies were made of sixty-nine representative industrial villages by the Institute of Social and Religious Research. These industrial centers have a higher proportion of foreign born than agricultural villages. The average population is much younger. Economic insecurity overshadows the industrial village. Frequently the local industries are owned and controlled in urban centers. A considerable amount of welfare work is being carried on. Religious, social and educational leaders tend to be confused and uncertain as to their programs. From the point of view of adult education, here is a large population group requiring special treatment and programs.

#### URBAN-RURAL RELATIONS

Here, says Walter Lippmann, is "a major aspect of the destiny of American civilization. . . . One cannot say

that the new urban civilization . . . is better or worse than . . . older American civilization of town and country. . . . But one can say that they do not understand each other and that neither has yet learned that to live it must let live. . . . Here is no trivial conflict."

Of first importance to recognize is that, just as the frontier has greatly influenced urban culture, so the industrial revolution and all that is associated with urbanization have greatly affected agriculture and village life. It is probable that our rural life is already more highly urbanized than that of any other country in the world. An agricultural editor has written a magazine article saying that American life is "one vast city." It is commonly acknowledged among rural extension workers that rural people are getting many of their new ideas as to ways of living from the cities. The new communications have all tended to destroy the traditional rural community—they have introduced so many centrifugal forces. This interpenetration of rural and urban brings with it particular social stress to the rural population. Writing about village young people, Elizabeth B. Herring of the National Board of the Y.W.C.A. says of their grappling with both rural and urban *mores*: "It is a difficult matter to try to live in two worlds, especially when the rules and regulations are not the same and there is no arbiter."

The major differences in characteristics between farm and urban groups have probably been most scientifically stated by Professors Pitirim A. Sorokin and Carle C. Zimmerman of Harvard University. Their studies indicate that farm residents experience fewer social and technical stimuli than those in cities; that they move about less; that they live longer, marry earlier and live in more homogeneous groupings than their city cousins; that there are only unimportant differences in intelligence, as revealed in various tests. They think that farmers generally

maintain social and intellectual positions roughly midway between the so-called upper and lower classes in the cities.

The rural-urban conflict is largely economic. Many farmers and urbanites are unaware of it. It is a struggle between large groups, and only their leaders come to close grips here and there. The basic difficulty is that in the economic development of the United States, agriculture has been put more and more into the background. But there are other aspects that are important. Farmers and villagers, for example, encounter difficulties over school policies, social discriminations and the like.

There are, of course, accommodation and coöperation, as well as friction and economic competition between town and country. Here and there are found rural-urban councils tackling specific tasks. The President's Research Committee on Social Trends found fewer instances of conflict in 1930 than in 1925, indicating growth of coöperative efforts between farm and village groups. But there is as yet little experience in the technique of improving relations between rural and urban people. Educators are making some contributions. In the last analysis, as E. C. Lindeman once said: "There should be no enmity between those who produce food and those who consume it; cities and their contiguous populations should discover a means of living in active, mutual inter-relationship."

#### SOME GENERALIZATIONS REGARDING RURALISM

The conservatism of rural peoples always stands out and irritates many urbanites. Numerous works have been written on the unique social characteristics and values of ruralism. Perhaps one of the most concise and accurate is the following by C. J. Galpin of the United States Department of Agriculture in a recent address:

"Agriculture is and has been the occupation of the yeoman type. . . . Agriculture has always been an occupation of moder-

ate economic reward. Manual labor in farming is mixed with intellectual effort. . . . Farming is hardly compatible with the highly specialized aptitude of genius, whether of a scientific, artistic, or ethical nature. . . ." The yeoman "creates a society whose flower is the family. . . . The farmer's slow acceptance of social reforms grows out of his determination to preserve his main qualities. . . ."

## CHAPTER II

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING ADULT EDUCATION

*The great rural interests are human interests.*

—THEODORE ROOSEVELT.

FOLLOWING the general introduction to things rural in Chapter I, our objective here is to consider the main social and economic factors which influence rural adult education. We are particularly concerned with the great migrations of people from and to the land; noticeable trends toward the formation of interest groups in rural communities; unfavorable economic developments linked with unduly high taxation; increasing tenantry with the consequence of roving, landless families; coöperative processes which are replacing the traditional individualism; extensive participation of governments in efforts for rural improvement; farm and village standards of living; evidences of changes in the traditional rural family; and information regarding educational interests and desires among rural adults.

#### THE GREAT MIGRATIONS FROM THE LAND

All through our history there have been migrations from the land to the towns and the cities. During the post-war years this movement of population was one of the great migrations of modern times. Certainly it has taken leadership and wealth out of rural communities, and has thus made a major contribution of rural life to urban centers. It also illustrates the close relationship between the farm and urban industry. For while the farms poured their surplus

population into the cities, it was found, late in the 1920's, that the urban centers were unable to absorb them as they once did. Migrants from the farms undoubtedly added to the urban distress due to unemployment.

According to the estimates of the United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, 19,400,000 persons moved from farms to towns and cities during the ten years of 1920-29, inclusive. During the same period about 13,140,000 persons arrived at farms from towns and cities. Allowing for the large excess of births over deaths, the farm population showed a net loss of 2,000,000 persons for the period. During 1930-32, as before indicated, it started gaining again, until the total number of persons on farms is probably again equal to what it was in 1910. There have been few thorough analyses of these migrations. In Vermont, it was found from a study of three rural townships between 1910 and 1930, that migrants from the country had more formal education than those who remained residents or than the immigrants. In these three towns nearly half the sons and more than half the daughters emigrated during the twenty-year period considered. In Virginia, a study of the quality of the migration from the farms of Albermarle County, as contrasted with that of the population remaining, revealed that the families of the best educated and those of the most favorable economic status sent more migrants to the cities than those with less schooling and lower incomes.

#### GENTLEMEN PREFERRING FARMS

What of the gentlemen preferring farms? There has always been a back-to-the-land movement, but it has usually escaped public notice because the counter movement overshadowed it.

Before the depression C. J. Galpin asked 10,000 men who had gone to the land why they had done so. It was found that 7,700 of the 10,000 had been farmers before,

and that 1,000 more had been born and brought up on farms. Analyses of the testimony of these 8,700 men who had farm, then city, then farm experience, yielded the following summaries.

1,600 men said, in substance: "Living costs were too high in the city. We can make more money and save more on the farm."

1,400 said: "City work is too hard and too uncertain."

1,000 said: "We like the farm because we are more independent there."

2,000 said: "We were tired of city work and city life."

2,700 said: "We found the city was no place in which to bring up children. We have gone back to the farm for the health of the family and better living conditions."

Perhaps of chief significance for adult education are the evidences of increasing mobility among the rural population and the more frequent contacts between rural and urban groups—that rural life, like urban life, is increasingly "out on the main highways."

#### FROM LOCALITY TO INTEREST GROUPS

One of the most significant trends for adult educators to consider is that revealed by J. H. Kolb of the University of Wisconsin, who thus summarizes a thorough study of rural groups: "Fundamental changes are taking place in rural group relations. Locality no longer holds country people to the restricted social, educational, religious or business contacts as obtained a score of years ago. They are now more free to make such associations by deliberate effort on the basis of special interests and particular desires."

Studies were made of 351 local group organizations in five Wisconsin counties. "Twelve primary poles of interest around which these organizations move and have their being were isolated. . . . The outstanding characteristic of these groups is that they are not simple or single in their

interests. Some hark back to the old general, neighborhood type of organization. Many of the interests are not yet highly specialized. . . . The twelve interests about which these 351 groups formed can be enumerated as follows”:

Social enjoyment	Home improvement
Better farming	Public and civic affairs
Helping the school and teacher	General community betterment
Better business	Uniting or federating local units of organization
Young people's activities	Mutual improvement
Health and social welfare	Helping church and minister

The President's Research Committee on Social Trends found as many social organizations in rural communities in 1930 as there had been in 1925. There was a high death rate, but new organizations were constantly being formed. Women's clubs, study groups and civic organizations were more numerous in 1930 than in 1925, while the lodges and sewing clubs were declining in patronage.

#### INCOME AND TAXATION

The most extensive economic information about rural life is that gathered by the United States Department of Agriculture for the farm population. Village studies have been isolated and do not cover periods of years so that trends can be considered. We interpret here, therefore, mainly the reliable data in regard to the farming group.

During the post-war period, the economic development of the United States has been such as to make the position of agriculture very unfavorable. W. I. King, an economist studying the national income, says of the period 1923-28 that the farmer “failed to obtain his proportion of the remarkable increase in income characterizing the period beginning with 1923.” Farmers received even during the most favorable years of 1920-30, only 10 per cent, perhaps

less, of the total money income of the people. Prior to the war, agricultural producers received about 20 per cent of the total income. The proportion of income going to agriculture has declined more rapidly than the number of workers. There are as yet no comprehensive figures or studies for the depression years of 1930-32, but such indices as are available indicate that the purchasing power of the agricultural population was seriously impaired.

In November, 1932, prices of farm products were only 54 per cent of pre-war, and the purchasing power of farm products was only 51 per cent of pre-war, while taxes per acre on farm property were more than doubled. The burden of indebtedness on farm property was considerably greater in 1932 than during pre-war days. Low prices produced slender incomes, which could only with difficulty pay indebtedness contracted in more favorable days. Defaulting of taxes on farm property was increasing, and farm mortgages were in a precarious state in many sections. Careful and thorough research has demonstrated that farmers pay heavier taxes in proportion to income than any other large economic group, and so conservative an economist as Richard T. Ely has warned for almost a decade that if present trends continue the tax burden will actually make many farmers tenants of the state. Taxes on farms are mainly in the form of property levies by counties and minor governmental units, and, to a lesser extent, by state governments. Only a very small proportion of farmers have been fortunate enough to pay federal income taxes.

Reviewing recent economic trends, C. W. Warburton, director of extension work of the United States Department of Agriculture, has noted, among others, the following: The declining price levels of farm products; their decreased purchasing power; the relatively increased cost of farm machinery (because of low prices for farm products); the great surplus production in many agricultural

commodities; a decline in the rate of increase of the total population with consequent limitation of the volume of food consumption. The unfavorable economic situation obviously affects rural adult education and shows the necessity of linking adult education closely with rural economic statesmanship.

#### FROM INDIVIDUALISM TO COOPERATION

The most important rural movement during the post-war period was that toward greater economic coöperation. The growth of coöperative associations for buying and selling is shown vividly in the following table, constructed from the press releases of the Federal Farm Board:

YEAR	NO. OF ASSOCIATIONS	VOLUME OF BUSINESS	TOTAL MEMBERSHIP
1915	5,424	\$635,839,000	651,186
1925	10,803	2,400,000,000	2,700,000
1930	12,000	2,500,000,000	3,100,000
1931	11,950	2,400,000,000	3,000,000
1932	11,900	1,925,000,000	3,200,000

Gross figures for membership are given. It is generally thought that, allowing for individuals who are members of more than one coöperative, about 2,000,000 farmers, or about one-third of the total in the country, are members of coöperatives. The real effects of the depression upon coöperatives are not yet known, but the last information indicates that they have been fairly stable in the midst of difficult economic conditions. The large coöperatives that have had loans and assistance from the Federal Farm Board seem to have done better than others. It must be noted that coöperative economic processes are still slow and precarious. There has been a high proportion of failures in some areas. Coöperatives do a small proportion of the total business of buying and selling. It is not yet clear that

there is among the people the will to create a more coöperative economic order.

#### GOVERNMENTAL EFFORTS IN RURAL IMPROVEMENT

Governmental participation in efforts for rural improvement has been varied and extensive. Nine federal agencies, the entire Department of Agriculture being regarded as only one of these, have had special responsibilities for some form of agricultural, educational or health work. Yet H. C. Taylor, formerly Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, said at the International Conference of Agricultural Economics held in 1930: "While the government is committed in principle to giving thought to the economic well-being of the farmer, it has not yet developed effective methods of accomplishing this purpose."

Since 1921 at least 15 important national agricultural laws have been enacted. But agricultural leaders and the farm press are very much divided in regard to the results of the special rural legislation and in regard to what federal services and policies should be. It seems plain that the United States has no consistent rural policy. Agriculture, too, is a house divided against itself. And the powerful business interests have not been as much concerned about rural affairs as even enlightened self-interest would demand.

Of our local rural government, Charles A. Beard recently observed: "About county government, the less said the better. In that sphere where Jefferson's independent, upstanding farmers, as distinguished from 'the mobs of the great cities' control affairs, little if any advance is to be recorded, and that little is to be ascribed largely to restraints and obligations imposed upon recalcitrant communities by state authorities. In rural government, aside from what has been accomplished by state and federal intervention, we stand about where we did in the days of McKinley, Hanna and Bryan."

Frank O. Lowden, former governor of Illinois, says: "The county no longer functions as a successful government." To him, our county institutions, such as jails and almshouses, are a disgrace. The county has taken on functions but it has no executive, excepting in a very few isolated places where managers have recently been employed. Governor Lowden thinks townships largely unnecessary—a highly controversial topic among rural dwellers. It is evident that we have too many counties, that consolidations are urgently needed in many states in the interest of efficient government. Although changes in local government proceed very slowly at this writing, a half dozen states are concerned about the matter and at least two states, Virginia and North Carolina, are launching reforms for better management on a noticeable scale.

#### TENANTRY

The last census recorded a sharp rise in the proportion of farms operated by tenants from 38.1 per cent in 1920 to 42.1 per cent in 1930. Tenantry has increased in some sections, decreased in others. Between 1925 and 1930 all states showed increases except New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware and Arizona. Tenantry is not a social evil, *per se*. It is frequently a step in the agricultural ladder from the status of farm laborer to farm owner. What is of great social concern is that tenantry in parts of the United States, mainly the South, is accompanied by high mobility of the population. Roving, landless men do not contribute to the building of a rural civilization—they handicap it.

#### STANDARDS OF LIVING

Forty per cent of our farm families have low standards of living mainly because they are living on poor land and operate farms that are too small, stated C. J. Galpin a few years ago. Since then, of course, the depression has seri-

ously lowered the living standards of the farm population generally.

In 1923, perhaps an average year for the post-war period, almost 3,000 representative farm families had on an average \$1,000 in cash annually for family living, *i.e.*, after the expenses of farm operations were deducted from the gross income of the family, according to the extensive researches of E. L. Kirkpatrick. In addition, these families had available the equivalent of \$600 annually in the form of food and fuel furnished by the farm, and in the form of rental of the house. Annual rent was figured at 10 per cent of the value of the home. Of a \$1600 budget for family living, slightly over 40 per cent went for food, including that raised on the farm as well as that purchased. Clothing took 14.7 per cent of the family budget, rent 12.5 per cent, light and fuel 5.3 per cent; and all other expenditures, including auto maintenance, health, education, charities, religion and personal, 26.3 per cent. The division of the budget is very much like that of urban industrial families. Numerous intensive studies of farm families have been made in various states, with findings fairly similar to those just summarized.

Comparisons of farm and village living are not numerous and cannot be made very precisely. Studying both groups in Minnesota, Carle C. Zimmerman found standards and incomes fairly similar. Both village and farm areas had low-standard and high-standard groups. In Crozet Community, Virginia, somewhat more favorable standards were found recently in villages than on surrounding farms by a group of investigators of the University of Virginia. Summarizing results of his studies of 140 agricultural villages, Edmund de S. Brunner wrote: "The economic situation is not one teeming with attractive opportunities for youth. . . . Two-thirds of the high-school boys and girls were not looking forward to staying in their home town. This tendency held for all regions. . . . The dissatisfaction of

youth with village life has a sound economic base, whatever may be its social causes."

Our rural regions have much less satisfactory medical services than have the cities. The threatened breakdown of rural medical service, with the disappearance of the country doctor, is in some sections a major social problem. Only about 20 per cent of our rural counties have public health departments with full-time personnel. Only one-third of our rural counties have any form of social work whatsoever.

#### THE RURAL FAMILY

Studies of village and farm family life have been less numerous than those of urban. It is common to generalize that on the farm particularly the family is much more stable, that economic forces tend to maintain it, that rural life preserves the family "at its best." Much depends upon the ideal one holds for the family as to the type of generalization one makes. A national journal found 80 per cent of its readers replying to a questionnaire "opposed to any steps which would make divorce easier to obtain." Sixty-seven per cent would favor legislation permitting "doctors to impart birth control methods to married couples." It is thought by some observers that new standards of living are arising in the country which bring about a "competition between children and other expenditures" which has for some time been evident in urban families. Some studies indicate that there is apparently less family disintegration and disorganization in rural than in urban areas, but also that these factors are increasing in the country as well as in the city. Lower divorce rates in the country may possibly be traced to less economic freedom for women and other social and economic limitations. It seems evident that the same social, intellectual and technical forces which have affected the functioning of urban

families are found also in rural areas, but not to the same extent.

### HOW MUCH LEISURE?

Most adult educators say rather glibly that there is increasing leisure for all. But D. R. Mitchell of the Department of Agricultural Economics of the University of Wisconsin says, after carefully studying farm management records in five states: "Farmers are working just as many hours as they did 15 or 20 years ago. . . . The use of power equipment has resulted in larger farm units rather than in increased leisure for the farm operator." The data cover long periods of years for representative farm operators in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Colorado, New York, Kansas, and only in the last state do social scientists find evidence of increasing leisure for farm operators. Of Wisconsin, Professor Mitchell says: "The use of the tractors and other power equipment has not yet shortened the work day. . . . The Wisconsin farm operator works 9.6 hours on week days and 5.7 hours on Sundays. If we consider summer and winter periods separately, we find that . . . he has . . . a 66-hour week in the summer and a 61-hour week in the winter."

Madge J. Reese of the United States Department of Agriculture has summarized the results of studies of the work day for farm women in five states as follows:

### THE WORK DAY OF FARM WOMEN

STATE	AVERAGE NUMBER						
	HOURS PER DAY						
Oregon . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	9.1
Washington . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	9.0
Nebraska . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	10.7
South Dakota . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	9.4
Rhode Island . . . . .	.	.	.	.	.	.	7.7

Working hours for women are sharply reduced as children grow older, but it appears evident that a compara-

tively long work day is typical for farm women as well as farm men. The wise and creative use of leisure is thus perhaps not so simple in rural as in urban areas. The depression years have caused in some areas a return of still longer working hours, with the performance of more functions such as soap making, sewing, etc., in the home than was the case in more fortunate years.

#### EVIDENCES OF EDUCATIONAL INTERESTS

We have evidence that considerable numbers of adults in the country desire to pursue study. A group of 389 "Master Farmers" located in 28 states have testified that they have done their most significant learning since they became adults. Almost 60 per cent of these said that the solution of farm problems depends upon education.

A national conference of farm women considering the question, "What do farm women want?" answered among other things: "Beautification of farm homes, more leisure, a chance for following hobbies, good music, good pictures."

Elizabeth B. Herring has found in a Wisconsin community that older and younger women differed considerably in interests they wished to pursue. Middle-aged and older women tended toward sewing. Younger women, particularly those who had been to high school or beyond, had diverse interests—among them bird study, gardening, music, reading. A few expressed a desire to pursue further study of mathematics, church work, church music, history, social science, color harmony, philosophy.

Reading matter in farm homes has been found to vary widely in different sections of the country, and numerous quantitative analyses of it have been made. For example, in a group of Oklahoma rural communities, practically no books were owned by families and no local public libraries were available. In other areas a much better situation is found. Douglas Waples and Ralph W. Tyler, in their study entitled *What People Want to Read About*, included

a group of Vermont farmers among a variety of other groups. These rural dwellers expressed preferences for books on economic, political and vocational subjects. Military preparedness was a topic among the "highest tenth" in interests. They showed average interest in sports, in what makes a successful marriage, movies, international goodwill. Analyses of library demands actually made by Vermont farmers indicated that the main interests were the home garden, actors and actresses, artists and musicians, interesting places abroad, chemical inventions, exploration and discovery, detection and prevention of crime, aviation, animals, comments on modern America, motion pictures, child training.

Illiteracy is higher in the country than in the city, but not to a marked degree except for the Negro population. The 1930 census figures may be summarized as follows: For the white population in the urban population the proportion of illiteracy among persons of ten years and over was 2.5 per cent; in rural-farm territory it was 3.4 per cent; in rural non-farm territory 2.9 per cent. Among Negroes illiteracy ran to 9.2 per cent in urban areas; in the rural-farm population it was 23.2 per cent; in the rural non-farm population it was 20.5 per cent.

The President's Research Committee on Social Trends found in 1930 that people in rural areas were much more active in discussion of issues of the day than in 1920 or 1925. Correspondence study in rural areas was increasing. Demands upon libraries were greater.

This will serve as the conclusion of our interpretation of many of the characteristics of rural America. The purpose of Part I has been to give a brief and comprehensive description of the social life, the economic and cultural status, and important recent changes in the communities in which adult education is going on. We now proceed to our consideration of the wide variety of programs and activities of adult education in rural America.



## PART II

### ADULT EDUCATION IN RURAL AMERICA



## CHAPTER III

### LIBRARY SERVICES

*Standing libraries will signifie little in a countrie where persons must ride for some miles to look into a book; but lending libraries which come home to them without charge may tolerably well supply the vacancy.*—THOMAS BRAY.

THE Reverend Thomas Bray of London wrote the above in 1697 in support of a proposal for establishing libraries in Maryland and other "foreign plantations." Yet in 1926 the American Library Association found over 80 per cent of the people living in rural territory in the United States without local public libraries, whereas only about 5 per cent of the urban population was without this service. There were two states—largely rural—in which the per capita expenditure for library service was two cents. In one rural state the annual circulation of books was eighteen one-hundredths of a book per person. Out of 3,065 counties in the United States, 1,135 had no public libraries within their borders in 1926. Almost 3,500,000 people in Pennsylvania, for example, were without local library service. William S. Gray and Ruth Munroe in their book *Reading Interests and Habits of Adults*, published in 1929, summarized numerous studies of reading matter in farm homes and concluded that "newspapers and magazines are read far less widely on farms than in cities, and that the percentages vary widely in different sections of the country and even in the same state and county."

Progress has been made since 1926, although complete statistics are not available. In the decade 1920–30, county public libraries increased from 99 to 225; in certain states

the growth was marked, as in New Jersey, from one to eleven, comparable to the rapid increase in California in the preceding decade from one to forty-three; permissive county library laws were passed in thirteen states, indicating wide interest; state library extension agencies were set up by nine states. In 1931, in California alone, 11,256,-465 volumes were circulated by county libraries. In Minnesota where the movement is younger, 647,253 volumes were circulated. The same decade saw the first national approach to the problem by the Library Extension Board of the American Library Association; state and county experiments and demonstrations carried on with grants from educational foundations; and active work, often through library extension committees, on the part of national rural, educational and social agencies.

In the year 1932, therefore, a small but growing percentage of rural people had local public library service organized on a unit large enough to be efficient and comparable to that of the cities, and were making good use of it. Obviously a very large percentage are still without it, although many are using the long distance book service of the state library extension agencies. Rural library extension is urgently needed. A strong influence for it is the growing recognition of the dependence of rural adult education upon adequate library service.

#### TYPES OF LOCAL LIBRARIES

By far the most common type of library serving the rural population to some extent is the one in a village or town having up to about 5,000 population. This library may be open to rural people by courtesy or on payment of a fee for non-residents. In reality, these small libraries do not make much of an impression upon large numbers of rural people. They are open for limited or irregular periods. Farm people particularly find it difficult or impossible to make full use of these libraries.

The average small library is so handicapped both in book stock and untrained personnel that it can give little attention to the book wants of its rural readers. There are of course exceptional cases where a skilled and resourceful librarian gathers available free material, uses to the fullest extent the resources of the state library agency, and works with rural organizations and leaders. But an annual budget of \$4,000 is the minimum for efficient public library service, according to a study by J. H. Kolb of the University of Wisconsin in 1925. A village of less than 4,000 people must therefore provide support at an average of more than one dollar per capita, or be satisfied with a low grade of service, or join with the neighboring county in a larger library.

One must not overlook the rural services of city libraries, particularly those found in cities of 10,000 to 25,000. Many of these libraries establish branches, serve neighboring schools or give special suburban or rural service, sometimes by contract with a township or rural school district. Many city libraries serve non-resident borrowers by mail, or at the building for a fee. But it is obvious that only a small proportion of rural persons are at present using city libraries.

In Ohio, Delaware, Missouri and other states, school district libraries are public in every sense of the word. Those located in cities may render some rural service. The public library of a consolidated school district may serve an entire township. Usually these library units are small, and they do not reach effectively the rural populations in the states where they are established.

In New England the town, corresponding to the township in many other states, is the unit of library support outside of the cities. The states of New England are dotted with these libraries, most of the 1,391 libraries in the region being this type. Massachusetts and Rhode Island report at least one library for each town. The more

thickly settled sections of the other states are apt to have town libraries. The average population of the New England town is less than 3,000 and its area varies from thirty to forty square miles. The services of many of these libraries are limited, although their book collections are supplemented by state loans.

Inter-town coöperation is under consideration in Massachusetts through a system of regional book lending centers. A regional library experiment is under way in Vermont, an outgrowth of the work of the Vermont Commission on Country Life, to be described in Chapter XIII. District libraries are developing successfully in Maine, where rural towns and existing city libraries are forming library districts.

There are about 475 township libraries outside of New England. Indiana has about 160, New York about 110. The rest are mainly in Middle Western states. They serve from one to four townships each. Townships both maintain separate libraries and contract with near-by institutions for local service. The township library generally serves rural people better than the village library. The hours when the library is open are more convenient for people living on farms. Many of the township libraries have more resources than village libraries. A few of them take books to the farm homes by book automobiles. But usually the township is too small a unit for effective library service. Again, it must be noted that in twenty-five states there are no townships at all. These are mainly in the South and West. Therefore, the township cannot be a national unit for local library organization.

#### THE COUNTY LIBRARY

The most promising type of library for meeting the needs of village and farm people has been that organized on a county basis, and supported by public funds. There are now 231 of these in 35 states. Some sixty per cent of

the counties operate independent units, while the remaining forty per cent make contracts with city libraries for rural service. A sketch of the county library movement is in order here.

Fairly early in our history there was some interest in county libraries. The constitution of the State of Indiana, adopted in 1816, authorized counties to sell some of their land and devote the proceeds to library purposes. The few libraries thus established soon disappeared because the maintenance funds voted were inadequate. The next state to take action seems to have been Wyoming in 1886. All but four states (outside of New England) now have enabling acts, permitting counties to vote funds for libraries. The first modern county libraries were established in 1898 in Van Wert County, Ohio, and Washington County, Maryland, as independent units, and in Hamilton County, Ohio, on a contract with the Cincinnati Public Library. Washington County, Maryland, operated the first book wagon, now the "bookmobile." The movement has proceeded with considerable popular support, because usually a special tax must be voted and sometimes a special election must be held. The American Library Association has had a large part in popularizing the county library idea, in creating standards for their operation and in assisting state agencies and local leaders in library extension, largely through the work of Julia Wright Merrill.

The county library maintains branches in towns and villages, or stations in rural centers, and collections in rural schools throughout the county. Books are sent to local units by automobile or other forms of transportation. Frequently service is given directly to patrons by bookmobile, following regular routes or schedules. The central library is open to all; service is usually available to individuals by mail; and questions are answered over the telephone. Any book, anywhere in the county system, is at the service of a serious student, no matter where he

may live. The state library is called on for unusual books. In addition to books, county libraries often circulate periodicals, pictures, lantern slides, music and phonograph records.

Administration of the library, including appointment of the librarian, is usually in the hands of a county library board, appointed by the county governing body. Usually existing local libraries may become a part of the county system if they wish. The library may be financed by an annual appropriation from the general fund of the county or by a special tax levy. The amount of support varies considerably. The American Library Association recommends \$1 per capita as a minimum for good library service. Pennsylvania in 1931 was the first state to vote state grants specifically for county libraries to supplement county funds. Strong movements for state aid are under way in several states. An effort to secure Federal grants, to be made when times are more favorable, has been endorsed by the Council of the American Library Association. That rural people are ready to support book service, once they have had it, has often been proved. In 1932, the Richland, South Carolina, County Library achieved the distinction of being the one agency whose budget the Farmers and Taxpayers League did not recommend cutting. The County Court of Beaumont County, Texas, in response to protests from all over the county, not only gave up a proposed cut but even granted an increase.

The county unit has certain advantages. It is a unit large enough to permit the employment of a trained librarian, to maintain a diversified book stock, and to secure adequate financial support. On the other hand, there are many counties in the United States which are too small to maintain good libraries. There are some small states in which county units may not be needed. There is a definite trend toward combinations of counties for library service and toward regional libraries. Most state laws permit counties

to contract with one another for library service, and two such contracts have been made in California. Michigan passed a law in 1931, permitting the establishment of regional libraries, and a demonstration of this type is needed. Southern librarians went on record in 1932 as urging adequately financed demonstrations of units of library service larger than the county. The regional experiment in Vermont has already been mentioned.

#### THE STORIES OF TWO COUNTIES

Many illustrations might be given of the way county libraries have greatly increased reading. In Jackson County, Michigan, in 1930, the Board of Supervisors appropriated \$5,000 for the establishment of a county library in connection with the Carnegie Library in the city of Jackson. With the \$5,000 appropriation, the county librarian equipped her office, bought a small book truck, paid her salary, bought supplies, and several thousand books. The state library loaned 1000 books to assist the county.

By the end of the first year of operation, 27 local stations had been established. Six of these were in town libraries; 13 in local stores; 6 in schools; 2 in homes. Every township in the county was being served. The total circulation of books outside the county seat was 45,953 to 2,971 borrowers. The librarian made 565 visits in the form of calls to stations and schools, attendance at club meetings and fairs. Seventy-two schools were given some service, the total circulation in schools being 3,174. Many gifts were received the first year; for example, 1,000 copies of magazines and 400 books.

The Webster Parish Library, Minden, Louisiana, began service October, 1929, in rented headquarters, to serve a parish unit, corresponding to the county, of 29,458 population including a large percentage of Negroes. It had to build up a book stock from nothing, plan branches, buy an

automobile truck for deliveries. In its second year, with an income of \$16,000 (including aid from the Julius Rosenwald Fund), it gave service from a headquarters library at Minden, from eleven community branches usually in consolidated schools, from a branch for Negroes in Minden and deposits in Negro rural schools. It circulated that year 176,122 volumes, a high figure for the population.

#### A HOMESTEADER'S TESTIMONY

The usefulness of the work of county libraries is commented upon by Mrs. Mary Hesse Hartwick, the wife of a forest ranger, in a letter to Elizabeth B. Powell, librarian of the Missoula (Montana) County Library, after a number of books had been received and read, as follows:

I acknowledge the receipt of the books, Taine's *History of English Literature* and Arnold's *Essays in Criticism*. The parcel post has been delayed on account of the fresh snow. The depth at the summit is almost five feet. The last trip required three days, the third relay being on horseback. We left the sled at the summit. Each day my husband, on snowshoes and with his packsack, was at the mail box. Finally we did get the mail and the books.

I have just received the return of my eighth and ninth lessons in English Literature from the correspondence school. With the lessons is a letter from the critic in the course, stating, "I am much pleased with the thorough and serious manner in which you are working." I expect a good report from the two lessons that I have in now, and when they return, would like to send them to you so that you may see the work I am able to do with the help of the books you send. I would not have been admitted to this special course or been able to do the required work without the books you have sent this winter and last. I want you to know how much they have meant to me in filling in pleasantly and profitably what otherwise would have been intolerable loneliness and waiting, shut in as we have been here in the National Forest, our only link with the outside world the mail—when it comes.

My husband wishes to thank you for the many informative books he has had on forestry, geology, soils, and the birds and

animals of this particular region. We have extended our horizon and look forward to many happy hours to come, when formerly we did dread the winters. Surely no better place could be found for quiet study of deep subjects. It is to renew one's youth. It is to be glad.

#### THE CALIFORNIA PLAN

Because California has provided the most comprehensive library service for rural people, an outline of the California library plan is given here. It calls for a library in every county, supported by a county-wide tax, available to every resident, in charge of a trained librarian who must be certified by the state board of library examiners. City and town libraries may become a part of the county system, avoiding duplication of expense. Schools may contract for service and turn over their library funds to the county. Back of the county libraries stands the state library, ready to advise and to lend a book too unusual or too costly for the county library to buy. Through a union catalog at the state library, the entire library resources of the state are available to every student. The plan aims to provide complete and effective library service for the entire state.

#### STATE LIBRARY EXTENSION

Beginning with the work of Massachusetts, started in 1890, forty-five states have set up library extension agencies. Their importance for rural library extension can hardly be over-emphasized. Says the report on *Library Extension* of the American Library Association: "State-wide library service is the function of a state library extension agency. It aids in establishing local and county libraries and developing existing libraries. It supplements their book collections from its larger resources. It gives direct book service to communities, groups and individuals until adequate local library service is established. It often advises or supervises school and institution libraries. It

sets up a program for the library development of the state. Without such leadership, library progress is slow and haphazard."

The first form of state book extension was the small traveling library. It was estimated that over 1,000,000 books were circulated in this manner in 1926. In many states the majority of these libraries go to rural schools in lots of fifty to several hundred volumes.

The mailing of one or several books directly to individuals is a newer form of extension but is expanding rapidly. It was perhaps the natural sequel of the rural free delivery. Package libraries sent out by extension divisions of universities or university libraries as well as by state library agencies are extensively circulated in 35 states.

State book service has meant much in the lives of rural people. It has been estimated by the American Library Association that within recent years about 1,500,000 books may be circulated annually by state agencies. The word of its possibilities is spread through exhibits at state fairs and meetings of state organizations, through circulars of state agricultural extension departments, through talks at farmers' weeks, and in many other ways. Yet even where state appropriations are generous and publicity vigorous, only a small percentage of the rural people of the state are actually served. Difficulties of expressing book needs by letter, lack of opportunity to see and handle books, and to talk with a librarian, the postage charges, are all handicaps. A single county library which exposes people to books often circulates as many volumes in its limited territory as a state agency does in an entire state.

In 1929, the Julius Rosenwald Fund began a five year program to demonstrate the value of county library service to the Southern states. Eleven county libraries were set up with aid given on condition that it would be matched with local funds. In a single year, at the middle of the five year period, these libraries circulated almost four

million books, through 691 service points, in service areas with a population of 864,467.

Another important demonstration was that conducted in Louisiana by the League of Library Commissions, with the aid of a fund appropriated by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The aim of the experiment was to learn what could be accomplished with a comparatively small sum in districts altogether without local library service. A state library commission was organized, a survey made and active work carried on over a five year period. The results have been reported in a pamphlet which can be secured from the Louisiana Library Commission, Baton Rouge, or the American Library Association, Chicago. Some results were: the enlistment of financial coöperation to continue state services from the legislature; the passage of a modern library law; the establishment of three parish libraries (corresponding to county units in other states); the purchase and equipment of a bookmobile for demonstration purposes; initiation of an active campaign against illiteracy; a library training course in the summer session of the state university.

#### EXPERIENCE REGARDING LIBRARY EXTENSION

Early in 1929, the Library Extension Committee of the American Library Association adopted the following statement of the sum of experience in efforts to bring library service to rural people:

The rural people demand equal educational and cultural opportunities with their urban neighbors;

This equality can best be had through the establishment of county libraries adequately supported by public funds under trained librarians;

County appropriations for county library service must be supplemented and stimulated by state and federal aid, and, at this early stage of the movement, by gifts of individuals and organizations and grants from educational foundations;

Demonstration county libraries in every state would prove the value of the service;

Information about county library service must be spread through the press, the farm journals, by exhibits and leaflets, by speakers and field agents; and

All national and state agencies concerned with rural progress share the opportunity and the responsibility for furthering county library development.

#### THE LIBRARY AND RURAL ADULT EDUCATION

The adult education activities of a county library touch both vocational and cultural education, formal and informal. They fall into three distinct divisions: aid in carrying out the educational programs of other agencies in the county; aid to individuals wishing to take advantage of educational opportunities offered by state and other agencies at a distance; informal, individual adult education through consecutive reading.

An alert county librarian establishes contacts with rural leaders and organizations, learns their educational programs and buys books accordingly; for example, on co-operative marketing or home decoration. Printed or mimeographed subject lists are then prepared for the county agent, the home demonstrator or the nurse to distribute, or the books themselves displayed in the respective offices. The library provides the material needed for grange debates and plays, for farm bureau work, for parent education study groups. The librarian gives book talks before various county organizations or writes book notes for their organs. Meetings are often held in library auditoriums. The county librarian in Tulare County, California, has participated actively in the "week-end school" to be described in Chapter IV.

University extension and other correspondence students supplement their long distance instruction with reading matter supplied by the county library. When a student enrolls for extension work with the University of Indiana,

the latter at once notifies the library nearest him and the librarian then sends him an invitation to call on the library for help. The effectiveness of education by radio is also greatly increased by follow-up reading. County librarians post announcements of the educational courses offered by the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education and others, and display suggestive printed matter to be read before or after each broadcast.

Much informal adult education is carried on by the librarian with the individual reader, either through use of "Reading with a Purpose" or other printed reading courses, through specially prepared lists or through personal reading guidance. A national prize contest in chemistry was won recently by a county library patron, as a result of a library reading course. The same library reports preparing lists on cattle testing and radio. Another library borrowed books on aëronautics for a would-be aviator, and supplies vocational guidance material to high school graduates.

The vital contribution of the library to adult education is evident. In most significant adult education efforts, librarians have some part. Certainly library service is as indispensable to rural as to city people. The degree of leadership of the library of course depends upon its resources and upon the ability, personality, and interest of the librarian. Many county libraries are still working under handicaps of insufficient book stock and personnel. But the achievements of the best county libraries promise much for rural adult education.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Who needs education more than the educator himself?  
Who needs it so much?—L. P. JACKS.*

THE "little red schoolhouse" as a symbol of rural public education seems to have a secure place in the affections of the American people. Yet few of them know that our little schoolhouses are neglected institutions and that the rural public schools function under considerably more handicaps than those in cities. During recent years the salaries of rural teachers have averaged about one-half of those of urban teachers. Living costs are lower in the country than in the city, but not by fifty per cent. School terms are shorter. Teachers in the country are the least experienced and the most poorly trained. The turnover among young teachers is particularly high. Rural America, as was pointed out in Part I, has about forty-three per cent of the total population, yet three-fourths of the high schools in the nation are in rural territory. This means obviously that there are numerous small institutions. A much smaller proportion of rural children attend high schools than is the case in urban territory. The problems of distance, and of inadequate financial resources, are still to a large extent unsolved. If one considers the rural Negro population, the situation is still less favorable. For in spite of notable progress as compared with previous years, Negro education still lags behind other phases.

#### THE PUBLIC EDUCATION ENTERPRISE

Considering the farm population alone, there are slightly less than 150,000 one-teacher schools, about 24,000 two-

teacher schools, and about 18,000 consolidated schools to which farm children are transported. The total enrollment in these schools is about 6,500,000 pupils. It is estimated that at least 1,250,000 additional farm children attend other schools than the above types, located in villages and towns. There are about 300,000 teachers of farm children including those in one- and two-teacher schools and estimating an average of six teachers per consolidated school.

In the entire rural territory, farm and non-farm, including villages up to 2,500, are found more than half of the entire elementary school enrollment of the nation, almost two-thirds of the elementary school teachers, and about nine out of ten of the elementary schools; also more than a fourth of the entire secondary school enrollment, more than a third of the secondary school teachers, and, as previously noted, three-fourths of the high schools.

Rural education has not been without progress during the past two decades. Supervisors were being employed in increasing numbers to the time when the depression began. Standards for the education and certification of teachers were gradually being raised. During the post-war period many communities improved buildings and equipment. In half the states "equalization funds" have been functioning to the end that the total resources of a commonwealth were being used to supplement the resources of the less fortunate districts—a principle which according to a majority of rural educators must now be employed for the country as a whole if rural children are to have proper educational facilities.

#### RURAL SCHOOLS SUFFER MOST IN DEPRESSION

During the depression, the evidence indicates that rural schools have suffered most. In the cities there are numerous examples of reductions of services and of salaries, of the postponement of improvement, of increasing demands and less money with which to meet them. But in the country

we witnessed in the spring of 1932, for example, a widespread closing of many rural schools, in some cases two or three months earlier than usual. There were numerous instances of teachers' salaries being unpaid or of long delays in payments. There were a few isolated counties, in which no schools were open during the years 1931-32 and 1932-33. The financial difficulties of some of the state governments aggravated many local situations. Rural educators are increasingly of the opinion that their fiscal problems will not be settled under the archaic tax systems of various states and local governments—that drastic revisions are necessary if even a decent financing is to be assured in the future.

Under such circumstances, Mabel Carney of Teachers College, Columbia University, concludes that an adult education program "is not ordinarily possible by the rural elementary school as now organized." Likewise, she says, the typical rural high school cannot be looked to for adult education programs except through increasing or supplementing its resources. Reviewing developments in the establishment of evening classes for adults in public schools during 1928-30, the United States Office of Education reported a total attendance of about 1,000,000 per year, but as a general rule there are few classes in places of less than 10,000 population.

Nevertheless, there are budding interests on the part of teachers and adults in a number of rural areas, the fruits of some experimentation, and state and national programs of great importance which can be here reviewed.

#### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

Among the best known programs of rural elementary education have been those of the Moonlight Schools. The schools have been the outgrowth of work begun by Mrs. Cora Wilson Stewart in Rowan County, Kentucky, in 1911. Evening classes for adults who could neither read nor write

were conducted by the rural school teachers. After a period of three years, about 1,000 adults who had attended classes were able to pass a literacy test. Stimulated by the work of a state illiteracy commission, about 130,000 adults living in the state of Kentucky were taught to read and write by the year 1922. Taking different forms, the Moonlight School idea spread to other states, mainly in the South, and extensive programs have been carried on in Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Georgia and elsewhere.

During the past decade the work in South Carolina, under the direction of Miss Wil Lou Gray of the State Department of Education, has reached large numbers of adults and has resulted in the discovery and demonstration of methods of effective elementary education. The most extensive project has been the organization of "lay-by" schools for adults which have been in session during the month of August. Recently there has been an annual attendance of over 7,500 persons in about 250 schools. The average attendance has been 70 per cent. The state pays the teachers a salary of \$100 a month, and the counties pay for books and organization expenses. The teachers selected for the work must attend the annual training course of one week held at Winthrop Institute. Says Miss Wil Lou Gray, who as State Supervisor of Adult Schools has been responsible for the state-wide program: "All study material and discussions are grouped around the rural home." Projects are developed which should show definite growth resulting in more attractive and comfortable homes, cleaner and healthier homes, increased reading, increased community activities. Miss Gray thinks that "the urge for learning is not so great in the country as in the city." All plans of procedure must be flexible.

The aim has been to reach the counties which have the highest proportion of illiteracy. County organizers are employed to coöperate with county superintendents of

schools to organize publicity in the local school districts. "The aim is to enroll every person in the district in some type of study." The state has a special program for organizing classes in the mill villages. All these efforts have resulted in considerable reductions in illiteracy.

Another significant project in elementary education has been that of the Boards of Education of Asheville and Buncombe County, North Carolina, under the direction of Mrs. Elizabeth C. Morriss, who has furnished the following information: Although schools for illiterates were made part of the public school system in North Carolina in 1919, the state has made no appropriation for the work since 1921. Buncombe County was the first county definitely organized for attacking the illiteracy problem with local public support.

This support, reluctantly given in the beginning, but reaching \$12,000 annually by 1927, was gained through the development of a Community School program based on coördinated community interests. The program is carried on through evening schools, community projects, home classes, home economics classes, vocational and economic aids, leisure time activities, a Farm and Garden Club and a Community School Council. The schools are an integral part of the public school system under the control of the Boards of Public Instruction of Asheville and Buncombe County. The staff responsible for the program for several years consisted of a director, six whole-time workers and an average of twenty teachers. Recently the program has had to be curtailed because of exceptionally bad economic conditions in the county.

Three-fourths of the adult illiterates found in this mountain county were native-born white men and women of pioneer stock. The remainder are largely Negroes with but a few foreign-born of half a dozen nationalities. The average age of all the students has been thirty years, although the range is from fourteen to eighty years. More

than 7,000 illiterates have been taught during the twelve years, and more than 3,000 others have come in from neighboring counties and states showing the need for a state literacy program.

The most significant features of this program are perhaps the help given by the students in attacking the problems of their own group and in motivating continuing education; the visiting teacher activities of the full time workers on the health, attendance and behavior problems of children of illiterate parents; definite coördinating activities with the Smith-Hughes and Smith-Lever extension services; the steady emphasis on concrete and co-operative community projects, including travel and recreation; the making and presenting of crude, original plays; county-wide participation by all representative literate groups in accordance with their own interests and programs; state and national contacts.

#### OPPORTUNITY SCHOOLS

Among the best known opportunity schools in the United States have been those conducted under state auspices annually for twelve years in the state of South Carolina. Miss Wil Lou Gray has called the opportunity schools "the flower of the adult work of the State Department of Education." The work of the two schools held in 1931, one for white adults at Clemson State Agricultural College, the other for Negroes at Seneca Junior College, was studied intensively and results were reported in a pamphlet written by Wil Lou Gray, William S. Gray, and J. Warren Tilton, published by the American Association for Adult Education. The purpose of the study was to determine the progress of adults of limited education when favorable conditions for learning are provided, and to consider the advantages and limitations of the instruction given for students of different levels of capacity and achievement.

Formal instruction for the two experimental groups



struction largely to the three R's or to make use of books for grade school children which fail to supply the information and help which adults need.

In summary, the facts which have been presented in the study show clearly that agencies of adult education may render invaluable service to adults of limited education. Because of the very nature of the training provided, an opportunity school of the type described in this report has unique possibilities of service. Such schools should be far more widely established. They should supplement the public school and be supported by public funds. Virtually millions of adults, both white and colored, are eager for advantages which opportunity schools afford. It is imperative that provision be made for such people so that they may become more efficient socially and may live much richer, happier lives.

About 2,000 persons have attended the schools held during the past twelve years. The statistics for 1932 indicate that the average age of students was 20 years; the oldest student was 47, the youngest 14. The average period of previous schooling was 5½ years. The State Department of Education has paid the costs of instruction. The costs paid by the student are \$20 each, which includes board, room, books and medical services. Various state organizations and individuals contribute scholarships for students who otherwise could not afford to attend.

#### SMITH-HUGHES CLASSES FOR ADULTS

National efforts to provide vocational instruction in agriculture and home-making have been made through the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917, and the George-Reed Act of 1929, the latter authorizing additional appropriations especially for agriculture and home economics. These Acts are administered by the Federal Board for Vocational Education. Grants are made to cooperating states, provided the states and local units appropriate an amount equal to the Federal funds. Instruction must be given to persons of 14 years and over. It must also be under public control

and of less than college grade. The term "vocational education" is strictly interpreted, and, according to the annual report of the Board for the fiscal year 1931, "federal money . . . cannot be made available for any other sort of education—such as manual training, industrial arts or vocational guidance. . . ." Developments of the Board's work in vocational agriculture and home-making for adults concern us here.

Of particular interest is the rapidly expanding program for adult evening classes in agriculture. In 1930 there were 2,116 evening schools with an enrollment of 62,952; in 1931, 2,545 schools with an enrollment of 85,688; in 1932, 2,975 schools with an enrollment of 87,138. "Practically every state had this type of work in some communities. Several had a larger enrollment . . . in adult work than in the all-day classes [for students of high school age]. In a number of states practically every teacher organized and taught one or more groups of adult farmers. The . . . response to the program was due, no doubt, to the fact that farmers were seeking assistance in the solution of their problems. This service through evening schools was rendered with practically no additional expense to the local communities, the state, or the Federal government, since teachers assumed this responsibility as part of their job.

"Among the more outstanding developments during the year [fiscal year 1931] were the work done in some of the drought stricken areas in helping farmers make adjustments to their situations, the development in many states of the live-at-home or balanced farm program. . . ." Demands for this service have been greatest in the South.

Of home economics instruction, a recent report of the Board says: "The largest expansion in 1931 was in adult classes, where a total of 124,263 home-makers were enrolled in federally-aided vocational classes, an increase of 26,888 or 27.6 per cent over the enrollment of the previous

year." No divisions are made in the Board's statistics for urban and rural classes, but it is known that a considerable portion of them were in cities.

The newspaper clippings received by the American Association for Adult Education during 1932 contain frequent references to adult classes being conducted by Smith-Hughes teachers. For example: "Delano (Minnesota) is to have evening classes again this year. Classes will be held in agriculture and home economics departments on a plan that is similar to that followed last year." "Adults are studying community needs," says the Royston, Georgia, *Record*. In Winterset, Iowa, 43 persons completed courses in feeding the family and in soils and legumes, and the graduation address was on modern farming in Russia. In Hatfield, Pennsylvania, a class for adult farmers was announced. The school buses were used in Waldron, Arkansas, in an effort to enlist "every farmer" in the night classes, and sixty-eight attended the first night. Audubon, Iowa, reported 110 men attending a unit course of twelve lessons.

#### ALL THE STATE'S A SCHOOL

The program of the State Bureau of Adult Education of Delaware represents an outgrowth of beginnings in "Americanization" and elementary courses in English to a wide variety of courses now being attended by about 5,000 persons a year. The announcement for the second term of the school year 1931-32 reads: "Opportunities for study are provided in subjects of recognized adult education value that have been requested by ten or more residents of the school district in which the center is located and have been approved by the Board of Education having jurisdiction over that district and by the State Department of Public Instruction. Any resident of Delaware over 16 years of age may join any class." An intensive ten weeks' program is followed, with classes meeting once a week.

Although the work has been expanded, classes in ele-

mentary school subjects are still offered for those adults who have never had elementary education. The interests of adult groups include music, handcraft, art appreciation, child study, sewing, public affairs, parliamentary law, dramatics, health and nutrition, agriculture. Reasons cited by adults for taking the courses are varied. They wish to acquire "a new viewpoint," want "new association," "to broaden the mind," "to keep up with my grandchildren." Others say "for my children's sake," "for a wiser use of leisure time," "to combine pleasure and knowledge."

Reports from several communities during 1932 may be referred to briefly. In Seaford, Delaware, a large demonstration of handcraft was planned, also a mixed chorus of 250 persons. At St. Georges, classes were organized in home decorating, dramatics and public speaking. At Richardson Park, a child study class was requested, and at New Castle one in music. Advisory councils on adult education are organized for each county. Miss Marguerite Burnett has directed the program.

The work in Delaware, a small state of only three counties, illustrates a program financed solely by state funds and given in local schools as requested by residents. There has been close coöperation with the parent-teacher associations. The cost has been only about one per cent of the total educational budget of the communities of the state. Although that percentage is not and will not be adequate to carry an expanding program, the experience demonstrates what can be accomplished with a relatively small proportion of the state's educational resources.

#### ACTIVITIES IN CALIFORNIA

A variety of adult education activities has been developed in the high schools of California, largely because of two factors: (1) The state has based its support of local education work upon the number of days of school attendance. The time spent by adults in day and evening schools

has been counted on the same basis as the day-school attendance of children. (2) The state department has furnished resources in the form of personnel which has been able to direct and supplement the work of the members of high school staffs. There has also been a strong teacher-training program, and a drive against illiteracy. The programs in three communities, which enlisted the interest of residents of farms and the smaller villages are here described:

#### TULARE

An experiment which has received considerable notice is the Tulare, California, week-end school, a series of meetings held on Friday nights attracting people from miles around the city. The method of this school has been one of lecture, address, and forum rather than of seminar or recitation on assignment. After a general session at half-past five, the group have supper in the high school. Half an hour of music or drama precedes the meeting of five or more sectional groups or forums, each following a particular interest through the season. Leaders in the state department of education have been studying the experiment to discover how far it can be adapted for communities in all parts of California.

The Tulare experiment illustrates well a trend in American life. Many of those in attendance live under rural conditions (or in rural localities) miles from town, yet the ease of travel causes a transfer of many functions to the town. An extension agent from the University of California was asked, "How does the university extension division serve the rural people of California who live outside towns and do not participate in town life?" The answer came very promptly, "There are no such people except in remote lumber camps and mining towns. The people who work, eat and sleep on farms ten, twenty, thirty miles from town think nothing of driving to town after

supper for the movies. They are quite willing to go to town for their education also." It becomes increasingly evident that the more formal phases of adult education carried on in smaller towns will also serve the people who live in a widening contiguous rural territory.

Among topics considered in 1931 at Tulare were "Looking ahead in community affairs," "Europe and the United States," "Problems facing parents," "The state legislature of 1931," "Adventures in modern science," "Trends in modern literature." In 1931-32, the general course meeting from 5:30 to 6:45 P.M. was a series of lectures on current questions, such as unemployment, the situation in Europe, the gold standard, Soviet Russia. There were four "special interest groups" which met from 8:00 to 9:30 P.M. Group I was on National Problems; Group II on The History of the San Joaquin Valley; Group III on Travel and Literature; Group IV on Developments in Popular Science. The total attendance averaged about 400 each evening; more than half of those attending participated in the group on National Problems. The school was organized in 1926, and has had six successful sessions. Mrs. Ethel Richardson Allen, one of the originators, says it was organized with "the spirit of the folk high schools of Denmark and the method of the week-end colleges of England." One device which has contributed to the success has been the use of the school buses to transport those attending. Another factor which has contributed has been the close coöperation of civic groups who have not only acted as hosts for special evenings, but also as sponsors of features on the program. Mrs. Allen further says: "The Tulare Experiment could be adapted to any small community of California—if there were just two people willing to give the time, the patience and the effort. . . . The public school is as fit an instrument as any to carry on adult education if it will recognize itself as it really is—the servant of the people. . . . Tulare has proved several things . . .

that the public school may be a suitable instrument for carrying on adult education . . . that the rural community . . . will respond abundantly if the right appeal is made . . . that adults everywhere are interested in knowing more about many things that contribute nothing directly to their earning capacity."

#### YUBA CITY

In 1932 the new high school in Yuba City, California opened an Adult School, and thereby raised questions as to how it differed from a Night School. The Principal stuck to the plan of finding unserved interests rather than of paralleling the old type of classes. An interest in music pointed the way to a chorus, and soon to two, one for men and one for women. Again playing the educational nonconformist, the Principal found an admirable leader and teacher in one of the local clergymen, for whom a special teacher's credential was secured. At once the choruses were invited to sing at all manner of affairs in both counties, with the result that the Yuba City Adult School became favorably known outside its own territory.

Still in the nonconformist mood, the Principal met a request for instruction in making hooked rugs. In spite of all doubts and the shaking of some pedagogical heads, the class was extremely popular from the first. Women of all ages and interests in life became absorbed in the making of hooked rugs. The instructor was driven to her limit of strength by calls for work. Once more people approved the Night School. But the Principal himself little knew what would grow out of the class in hooked rugs. One of the first outgrowths was a class in the history of rugs. Women became particularly interested in the history of oriental rugs, and through rugs in the cultures of different peoples as portrayed in rug patterns, rug materials, and rug workmanship. Library resources were ransacked, not only locally but by requests in the State library resources

Quite as might be expected a broadening into other home-craft work soon came. Floors were covered with hooked rugs, and eagerness to do more things of a creative kind led women to amplify and beautify their homes with their own craftsmanship. Basketry became especially popular; block-printing, velvet tooling, pottery and weaving, were some of the other handcrafts which were taught.

Still another outgrowth of the hooked-rug venture was historical in direction. Study of old hooked rugs, then materials, and then patterns led to an interest in other pioneer relics which in California cluster around the '49 days. It was decided to organize and put on an educational exposition of pioneer days including exhibits of pioneer relics, a fashion show of California styles of the past, antiques, and curios. Classrooms were cleared out to permit organizing the exhibit materials by type and period. The class took over the task of locating exhibit material in all parts of the county with the result that an incredible amount of material was located. When assembled, the exhibit, wholly of local items, had a total value running into tens of thousands of dollars. Particularly interesting was the "Pioneer, or '49" room with miner's tools, home-made furnishings, spring wheels, pistols, guns, powder-horns, gold coins, strong-boxes, Wells-Fargo Express exhibits and the like. The present generation paused to visualize what former generations had done. Historical interests were strengthened and curiosities aroused.

The next growth from the hooked-rug origin came across the river in Marysville, whose merchants, not to be out-done, converted Main Street into its '49 guise with stage-coaches, ox-carts, mines, and store windows full of '49 relics and costumes. A further development from the Folkways Fair and from the display in Marysville was the organization of a museum in which many of the historical treasures and curios will find permanent care. Such interests, growing by the creative participation of com-

munities, find new ways of expansion. Coming in part from the Folkways Fair and in part from dramatic interest, *The Promised Land*, an historical pageant, took up the portrayal of early Sutter County history. General Sutter, General Bidwell, Stephen Field, the notorious stage robber Black Bart, settlers, miners, Indians, Mexicans, Chinese, all came on the stage to interpret "the days when men panned for gold, and women prayed for their success." In a less spectacular way a class grew for the study of "Local History and Landmarks," led most interestingly by a daughter of one of Sutter County's oldest pioneer families.

But the Hooked-Rug Class and its intellectual children to the third and fourth generation were not the whole of the Yuba City Adult School. A Folkways Fair has been held. A class in recreation has started another family of classes, as interest groups crystallize out of the larger recreation group, and continue separate growth. The Yuba City Forum was a direct growth from such an interest group. It has considered such topics as Europe today, our Latin-American Neighbors, Russia, Italy, Germany, Japan. The Forum was an answer to the interests of a large group in social and international problems. One of the gratifying results of the Yuba City Adult Schools has been growth from local view-points to national, even world-wide thinking. The recreation class, home-crafts class and the choruses, are all serving as training-grounds for volunteer leaders of similar activities in many other centers in the two counties. Many women's clubs have sent representatives to the Yuba City Night school in order to get their own handicraft work under way. Farm Bureau and other meetings have sought leadership in recreation from those trained in Yuba City. Musical life of churches and social organizations has received aid from the training of members in the choruses. Total expenditures for teachers' salaries and for overhead and other items have been

about \$2,400 a year. Pupil hours of attendance per year have totaled about 12,000.

Thomas L. Nelson, the principal, has permitted quotation of the following comments on administration:

One thing that has impressed me in my experience with adult school work is that you must be alert at all times to give adults a chance to make their wishes known. We have had a group of student commissioners in our adult school and have tried to keep a finger on the pulse of their desires. If you don't continually keep up with them and their desires, your school will go down. . . .

If more day school principals realized the value of the adult school to the day school, they would be more willing to take the time and trouble necessary for the administration of an adult school. Many of the adults who come to our school are parents of children in the day school. Through their adult classes they become better acquainted with the school and its teachers, and this helps to win their friendship and loyalty to the school. . . .

It is my ambition to make our high school serve the whole community, old and young, day and night, and I believe we are succeeding. The plant is in use practically every minute of the day from eight-thirty in the morning until ten o'clock at night five days in the week, and the number who use our plant for one purpose or another is astounding.

#### SANGER

Sanger is a town of about 2,500 persons, with a larger rural district surrounding it, 10,000 people in all, where the high school employs a full-time director of adult education and maintains carefully selected classes in a regular evening school which meets twice a week. The annual budget for 1932-33 is \$7,000. There are a number of classes of the "utility" type, such as those in dressmaking, book-keeping, typing, poultry management. But they are not strictly vocational courses, because no one who takes them expects to earn a living as a result of them—they simply find them useful in connection with their vocations. "Craft and shop work," according to Ruth H. Crittenden,

the director of adult education, "is done from the avocational motive entirely. . . . One very interesting development has been music. We have had group class work in piano for many years. . . . The class has had an enrollment of 20 and attendance averages 14. . . . A union choir effort did not materialize but instead a splendid men's chorus made its advent. . . . There is not a professional musician in this group. The leader is the chef at Fresno County General Hospital. He knows folks."

"Coöperative classes" have been emphasized, *i.e.*, those arranged by establishing close relations with other organizations. That is the way a series of public affairs luncheons developed into a class on "Problems of the Pacific Area" in 1930-31. An "ingrowing community" soon saw that the price of raisins was not only related to the price of cotton in Texas but was also affected by the standard of living in China. In 1931-32, the general theme was "Current American Problems." Another feature has been the "Tuesday Evenings in the Library." Attendance has averaged 35. Topics considered have ranged from the geology of the San Joaquin Valley to modern literature. In 1930-31 Mark Sullivan's "*Our Times*" was used as a basis for the programs.

In 1931-32, a total of nineteen courses was given. The following table furnished by Mrs. Crittenden gives the subject matter and the number participating.

	ATTENDANCE
Arts and Crafts . . . . .	15
Parent Education . . . . .	122
Civic Forum . . . . .	174
Modern Literature . . . . .	144
Agriculture . . . . .	15
Music (four courses) . . . . .	143
Citizenship for Aliens (four courses) . . . . .	74
Physical Education (two courses) . . . . .	96
Dressmaking . . . . .	33
Shop Practice . . . . .	63
Commercial Subjects (two courses) . . . . .	92
Total . . . . .	971

The yearly enrollments have increased from 490 in 1927-28 when the program was begun to a high point in 1931-32. The budget has also been increasing. In 1932-33, the program is being organized as a "senior evening high school," and increases in offerings and enrollment are being planned for.

#### AN EXPERIMENT IN MICHIGAN

At the Lincoln Consolidated School, near Ypsilanti, a formal program of adult education has grown out of informal community activities begun under the direction of H. A. Tape, the principal. The school coöperates closely with the State Teachers College at Ypsilanti, and faculty members there have encouraged the consolidated school's adult program.

The Lincoln School serves 63 square miles of territory. The present building was erected in 1925, and cost \$200,-000. It took the place of 13 one-room schools. At the principal's suggestion, the Lincoln Community Citizenship League was organized. Its purpose was to be "continuing education," although it was not given to the community in those words. The League first undertook a few improvements such as the landscaping of the school grounds and some extensive planting stimulated by a "community-tree planting day." Then the League started sponsoring a lyceum course, for which from 500 to 800 tickets have been sold annually. A school alumni band was organized, and soon provided a little friendly rivalry for the school band. A series of agricultural fairs, short courses and exhibits was put on.

In the winter of 1931 the first community night school was held. Sessions were held twice a week for four weeks beginning the middle of January. The courses offered were those in the community chorus, the Bible, livestock feeding, child study, elementary electricity, English for foreign born, elementary home economics, horticulture and market

gardening, expression, home art, modern science. At the closing session a thousand people gathered for a special program and exhibits of achievements. The total enrollment was 225 persons. Students have the privilege of attending without charge, and the teachers have given their time without compensation.

#### THE NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association has a department of adult education which issues a quarterly bulletin and promotes discussion of the relation of the public schools to adult education. In 1929 a National Commission on the Enrichment of Adult Life was appointed "to encourage and assist toward a better use of leisure among adults." State commissions have also been appointed.

Willis A. Sutton, when president of the National Education Association, suggested that local superintendents of schools should appoint committees consisting of representatives of civic, economic, and educational organizations, to study the local situations in regard to adult education, disseminate the findings, and establish a central exchange on adult education.

The National Commission on the Enrichment of Adult Life appointed a committee on Rural Adult Education which recently made a report and recommendations. The Committee on Rural Adult Education says that the public school has an unusual opportunity "to open its doors and lend its resources for the use of adults in rural America," especially "in the less formalized intellectual and recreational activities of whatever type and in whatever field adults may desire." The committee further recommended and urged that "the public school personnel give aid in discovering and utilizing the other adult education resources, public and private, that are available or can be made available in rural America." It also stated that an immediate need was to develop public library service for rural areas.

## CHAPTER V

### AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION

*The man grew faster than the crop.*

—SEAMAN A. KNAPP.

It was in the year 1910. A Mississippi farmer was living on poor "piney" woodland worth \$1.00 an acre. He was in debt to the village storekeepers. He took no newspaper and would not read government bulletins. The "demonstration work" had been begun in his county in 1908, but he would have nothing to do with it. After much persuasion, he applied demonstration methods to about a half acre of cotton. To his amazement the results were remarkable and he acquired respect for "the government method." The next year his farm became a demonstration center. He soon paid his debts. He sent his daughter to college, his sons to high school. He took to reading government bulletins and subscribed to farm papers.

The agricultural extension system which has made very extensive use of the demonstration work has been described as a new leaven in rural life. It is found in every state, and in three-fourths of the counties. It is a many-sided movement which is also the largest adult education organization in the country, perhaps in the world. It is known locally under various banners, county extension work, county agent work and farm or home demonstration work being terms frequently used. Although now a national system, it is increasingly influenced by local rural opinion. In terms of method, the contributions are interesting and varied. Starting as a vocational movement, it has in some states broadened its objectives until now child

care, recreation or community organization come easily within its scope.

#### ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural extension work was begun in informal fashion very early in our history. The present national system has its roots in the activities of such as the following: The several agricultural societies organized shortly after the Revolutionary War, the agricultural fairs beginning in 1809, the state departments of agriculture and of the Federal Department of Agriculture, the land-grant colleges which were established after the well-known Morrill Act of 1862, the agricultural experiment stations which were made a national system by the Hatch Act of 1887, the numerous local farmers' institutes which were interpreters to the laity of the results of research and experiments, and the early extension services organized at the state agricultural colleges in response to demands for extension teaching.

In addition to these, considerable credit must go to that distinguished insect pest—the cotton boll-weevil. In 1904, Seaman A. Knapp of the Bureau of Plant Industry of the United States Department of Agriculture was given the responsibility of teaching farmers of the Southwest how to grow cotton successfully in an area infested with the weevil. Dr. Knapp had already demonstrated on a Texas farm that proper cultural practices would win out over the enemy. With Dr. Knapp went twenty-two men to encourage demonstrations on ordinary farms. They worked in the states of Texas, Arkansas, and Louisiana. In one year they held a thousand meetings among farmers, and 7,000 farmers agreed to establish demonstration plots under the direction of the government workers.

By 1906 Dr. Knapp concluded that experience called for an agent per county, although he had begun by assigning one agent to six or eight counties. On November 12, 1906,

W. C. Stallings was appointed to work in Smith County, Texas. In the same year the General Education Board began coöperating with the United States Department of Agriculture in financing what was known as "Farmers' Co-operative Demonstration Work in the South." County governments, chambers of commerce, and boards of education began making contributions toward the work. Home demonstration work among women was begun. By 1914 almost a million dollars a year was being spent on farm and home demonstration work in the South. It had made its mark.

County agent work in the North and West developed later than in the South. In 1911 an agent went to work in a county in Utah, another in New York. At that time 580 agents had already been employed in the South. Meanwhile the report of the Roosevelt Commission on Country Life, appointed in 1908 and recommending an adequate extension service at each agricultural college with a full-time director, was receiving attention. In 1909 the Committee on Extension of the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations, recommended a Federal appropriation for the expansion and improvement of extension work. Kenyon L. Butterfield was the chairman of the Committee. The Committee believed that a Federal appropriation was the best means of "stimulating the proper recognition and adequate organization of extension work in agriculture." Reviewing the objections to Federal participation, mentioning the view of many that "the Federal treasury is inadequate to the demands made upon it," nevertheless the Committee felt it had the "right and duty" to ask for \$10,000 a year for each land-grant college, and an additional appropriation to be divided on the basis of population.

In 1914 the Smith-Lever Law was enacted "in order to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to

agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." Broadly stated, the purpose of the Act was to enlarge and unify the programs which the state agricultural colleges, the counties and the Department of Agriculture were carrying on. It was expected that the law would be the means of carrying demonstration work into every county. Boys and girls as well as men and women were to be reached.

The plan was not welcomed everywhere with open arms. The dean of a Middle Western agricultural college was sure it was "doomed to failure." But the World War came, and the system was rapidly expanded. Tremendous demands for assistance in food production and conservation were made upon it. More and more counties hired men and women as agents. The plan seemed to work about as well in Virginia as in Iowa, in Idaho as in Maine, in California as in Michigan.

Viewed in terms of administration and finance the work became a coöperative effort of the United States Department of Agriculture, the state agricultural colleges, county governments, and, to some extent in certain states, local farmers' organizations. Provision was made for administration within the states by a contract or memorandum of understanding, whereby the state agricultural college must establish a department or division with a full-time director. Budgets and plans of work were to be prepared by the state director of extension, subject to approval by the Department of Agriculture. Within the Department a "State Relations Service" was organized, later known as the "Extension Service." Ten years after the Act had been in operation, C. B. Smith, administrator of coöperative extension work of the Department of Agriculture, reported that not one word of the original memorandum of understanding with the states had been changed and that no appeal had been made to Congress for amendment of the law.

## EXTENT OF THE SYSTEM

Unpublished figures furnished by the United States Department of Agriculture indicate that the sources of "funds allocated for Coöperative Extension Work" in the states and in Alaska, Hawaii and Porto Rico, for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1932, were as follows:

## EXTENSION FUNDS—FISCAL YEAR 1932

Federal Appropriations . . . . .	\$ 9,716,476.05
Appropriations within states . . . . .	15,682,400 91
Total . . . . .	<u>\$25,398,876 96</u>

That extension work continued to expand even in times of depression is indicated by the fact that for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1930, the total of appropriated funds was \$23,803,931.18 and for the fiscal year 1929—\$22,512,-646.85. The greatest financial stress has, of course, come recently, and the full effect of the depression upon the agricultural extension service cannot be told at this writing. The system has valiant defenders among farmers who are arguing that particularly in times of depression is the program needed.

The total number of professional extension workers on July 31, 1932, the latest tabulation available, was 5,929. During 1931 there were over 347,000 laymen and women serving as volunteer committee chairmen and project leaders. Data from two states indicate that the lay leaders give an average of twelve days a year to the program.

Professional workers were divided into the following groups:

State Directors and Assistants . . . . .	87
White State County Agent Leaders . . . . .	15
White State County Agent Assistant Leaders . . . . .	105
White State County Agricultural Agents . . . . .	2,314
White Assistant County Agents . . . . .	206
Negro State County Agent Leaders . . . . .	5

Negro Assistant State Leaders . . . . .	13
Negro County Agricultural Agents . . . . .	174
White State Home Demonstration Leaders . . . . .	47
White Assistant State Home Demonstration Leaders . . . . .	78
White County Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	1,178
White Assistant County Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	41
Urban Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	10
Negro State Home Demonstration Leaders . . . . .	3
Negro Assistant State Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	9
Negro County Home Demonstration Agents . . . . .	127
White State Leaders of Boys' and Girls' Club Work . . . . .	45
White Assistant State Leaders of Club Work . . . . .	90
White County Club Work Agents . . . . .	186
White Assistant County Club Work Agents . . . . .	31
Negro State Leaders of Club Work . . . . .	3
Negro County Club Agents . . . . .	1
Subject Matter Specialists . . . . .	1,161
	<hr/>
	5,929

The subject-matter specialists who are on the state staffs supplement and enrich the work of the county agents who are largely generalists, as we shall later see. The specialties of these workers are the following:

Agricultural engineering	Health and sanitation
Agronomy	Home economics (general)
Animal diseases	Home furnishings
Animal husbandry	Home management
Child care and training	Horticulture
Clothing	Marketing
Dairying	Nutrition
Entomology	Plant pathology
Exhibits	Poultry
Extension schools	Publicity
Farm management	Rodent pests
Forestry	Rural organization

Over half of the 1,161 specialists were interested in agronomy, dairying, poultry, publicity, horticulture, animal husbandry, and marketing.

Some idea of the relative emphasis upon projects is furnished by the following tabulation of demonstrations carried on by adults during the years 1927-31.

## ADULT DEMONSTRATIONS

	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Soils . . . . .	48754	60135	81624	—	—
Cereals . . . . .	41712	40339	42848	65368	68067
Legumes and forage	72539	71483	76023	98967	118872
Potatoes, cotton, etc.	35132	40655	43773	57087	67020
Horticulture . . . . .	98841	105957	127754	154415	217007
Forestry . . . . .	3358	4510	4870	5748	6594
Dairy . . . . .	22571	29815	32026	28554	24148
Animal husbandry . . . .	19793	19605	20878	25426	34927
Poultry . . . . .	50102	55443	62214	73317	59740
Agricultural engineering .	21749	24152	24427	28665	30705
Rodents and insects	22208	19591	16350	32891	45053
Agricultural economics	—	—	—	14019	24209
Foods and nutrition . . .	142650	175524	172476	98776	113273
Child training and care . .	—	—	—	8621	14007
Clothing . . . . .	81126	74644	84217	88952	91576
Home management . . . .	30950	33941	37467	37371	46861
House furnishings . . . .	33093	35052	38739	47320	56189
Home health and sanitation	23421	25387	27847	24864	32516
Miscellaneous . . . . .	24186	35293	36211	43821	39247
Total . . . . .	772185	851526	929744	934182	1089011

Another table, on page 73, taken from the comprehensive reports of all the counties shows how agents and specialists divided their time during the years 1925-31.

The extent of the system during the past few years may be summarized as follows: Three-fourths of the counties of the country employed one or more local agents, assisted by almost 1,200 full-time and part-time subject matter specialists. Over three hundred and forty-seven thousand men and women served as local project leaders and over 1,000,000 men and women put on demonstrations each year in agriculture and home-making and related subjects. The agricultural extension system has been reaching in one way or another between one-third and one-half of all the farmers of the country. County extension agents actually visit over 1,250,000 farm homes each year and conduct over 850,000 meetings of groups of men and women and boys and girls.

PERCENTAGES OF AGENTS' AND SPECIALISTS' TIME DEVOTED TO PROJECTS

PROJECT	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Soils . . . . .	5.2	5.2	4.8	5.1	5.1	—	—
Farm crops . . . . .	13.1	13.1	12.4	11.5	11.6	15.2	13.8
Horticulture . . . . .	6.9	7.3	7.1	7.3	7.0	8.7	9.4
Forestry . . . . .	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.9	0.9
Animal husbandry . . . . .	7.1	7.5	8.2	7.8	7.6	6.5	6.7
Dairy husbandry . . . . .	7.0	7.1	7.9	8.7	8.6	7.7	6.7
Poultry husbandry . . . . .	8.7	9.0	8.8	8.1	7.9	7.6	6.8
Rural engineering . . . . .	3.7	3.6	3.4	3.3	3.2	3.3	3.1
Rodents and insects . . . . .	2.0	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.1	1.3	1.4
Agricultural economics . . . . .	3.9	4.0	4.1	4.0	4.3	6.2	6.8
Foods . . . . .	4.8	4.6	4.6	4.4	5.2	7.0	7.1
Child care and training . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	0.6	0.6
Nutrition . . . . .	2.3	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.3	—	—
Clothing . . . . .	7.9	7.1	6.8	6.8	6.9	6.7	6.6
Home management . . . . .	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.7	2.2	2.1	2.0
House furnishing . . . . .	1.2	1.8	2.0	2.4	2.6	2.6	2.7
Home health and sanitation . . . . .	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.3	1.2
Community activities . . . . .	6.2	5.9	6.0	5.8	5.9	4.0	5.3
Miscellaneous . . . . .	16.6	16.0	16.3	17.0	16.3	7.5	8.0
Building Extension program . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	3.7	3.7
Organization . . . . .	—	—	—	—	—	7.1	7.2

# EVOLUTION OF METHODS AND PROGRAMS

In the early days of extension work, the method used was relatively simple. It was that of demonstration of farm and home practices found good by experience. It must be distinguished carefully from research or experimentation. Through the men and women who serve as agents the findings of research workers and of the agricultural experiment stations reached the laymen and greatly influenced their demonstrations, but the laymen and the county agent seldom did research or experimental work.

Extension work is largely teaching. It also calls for extensive participation of farmers and home-makers in the teaching process. The farm and home become a school, many farmers and their wives become teachers or at least

assistant teachers. The pressing local problems are dealt with. The felt needs of the people help to determine the program followed. In terms of method, agricultural extension work belongs in the camp of progressive education. One outstanding aspect of the program is that the laity provide constant checks upon the work of the professional educator.

The county extension agents maintain offices, answer inquiries personally by mail and telephone, distribute bulletins—in short, maintain a center of information. They call on the specialists on the state staffs for information and guidance, for help in organizing projects, for assistance in training lay leaders of projects. The agents can not possibly be specialists, although in areas where farming tends to be specialized, the agents naturally major on the dominant interests of the people of the area.

The statistics quoted give evidence that in agricultural instruction the major attention is still given to the technical and practical problems of production. The expansion of the work during the World War was in response to the national need for production and conservation of food. Within the past decade, however, the term "subjects related to agriculture and home-making," as found in the bill has come to be more liberally interpreted. In a few states guidance is now given by the state agricultural service in practically everything that relates to rural industry, rural home-making and rural welfare. The work among adult farmers gives evidence of greater interest in economics as contrasted with technical problems of production, a growing interest in marketing projects being perhaps the best illustration. Home economics interests have widened to include problems of nutrition, health education, parent education, family and social relationships. It is not too much to say that the trend in programs of the agricultural extension system is toward including anything that is educationally desirable for the improvement and enrichment of coun-

try life, although vocational efficiency is the basis of the program. It must be noted at once that the system has not yet gone a great way in cultural or social services, and that some extension directors still give only casual attention to other than vocational interests. It seems apparent, however, that the extensive educational agency created to give instruction to adults not in schools in subjects related to agriculture and home-making may become both an agency of cultural and of vocational education.

A recent study by H. J. Baker, director of extension in New Jersey, and M. C. Wilson, in charge of extension studies of the United States Department of Agriculture, of the activities carried on in 17 states reveals the following methods in use:

News service	Leadership training meetings
Circular letters	Demonstrations
General meetings	Correspondence
Office calls	Telephone calls
Bulletins	Extension schools
Farm or Home visits	Exhibits

Eleven important methods have thus come into the picture, in addition to that of demonstration, with which the work began. In a recent address on "Larger Objectives of Extension Work," Nat T. Frame, director of agricultural extension in West Virginia, says that agricultural extension must prepare itself to give guidance on the classification of land, the tax burden, the knotty problem of the reorganization of local government itself, the improvement of rural-urban relations, the direction of industry in rural areas, social service for marginal families, the cost of distribution of farm products, adult education and the wise use of leisure time.

#### WHAT LOCAL LEADERS DO

Several sampling studies reveal fairly precisely what the lay leaders do in the educational processes of extension

work. Miss Grace Frysinger of the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture reported to the National Conference on Parent Education in 1931 that in four states the lay leaders were giving almost twenty days per year to their work. "The effectiveness of local leadership in the extension program is evidenced by this study, which indicates that the number of farms or homes influenced to change practices averaged 11.7 per leader and that the number of practices changed averaged 29.1 per leader." Throughout the entire country county agents and specialists on state staffs are giving considerable attention to the training of lay leaders to carry on their projects.

A study of the activities of 171 local leaders in four counties in Kansas was made by M. C. Wilson of the Department of Agriculture and C. R. Jaccard of the Kansas Extension Service. About two-thirds of the adult leaders were men, about one-third women. Twenty-five per cent of the total group had received some college instruction, forty per cent had been to high school, while the others had not gone beyond eighth grade. About half of the leaders were elected at community meetings, the others being selected and appointed for their tasks. The average persons had been a leader on a project for two years, indicating some persistent interest. The average person reported influencing twelve other persons to change practices or to make use of extension information.

The activities carried on by this small group of lay leaders would make a long list. One-fourth of them directed the recreational activities of boys' and girls' clubs. Over half arranged exhibits at schools and county meetings. One-third sent out publicity in regard to meetings. One-fourth conducted actual demonstrations on their farms or in their homes. Almost nine out of ten did something to teach actual subject matter to members of their local groups or committees, through visits to other homes or farms, through talks at meetings, through casual personal

contacts, or through inviting others to observe the results of their demonstrations.

Local leaders also participate with the professional workers in program-making. Program-making in townships, counties, and states has itself become a real project in many areas. In Iowa, for example, program-making meetings are held yearly by townships. At this writing "Farm and Home Adjustment Conferences" are being held in the counties of some states in order to pool experiences as to the best ways of making the changes necessary because of reduced income and the serious effects of the depression. In many instances, a frankly emergency program is being recommended. More self-provident ways of living are being worked out. Clothing exchanges are being established in order to distribute fairly the unused garments in the community. The renovation and patching of garments is taught.

#### RESULTS OF EXTENSION PROGRAMS

Educators engaged in extension teaching commonly refer to certain intangibles as results of their program. They allege that they have assisted over two million men and women in thinking about their own problems, often with the result that new human relationships are discovered, social horizons are widened, and new information is acquired. The extension program has aided groups of men and women to think in terms of resources for improvement of their situations. It has stimulated coöperative action. Perhaps most important of all, it has developed scores of thousands of men and women for leadership in community enterprises and even for effective teaching of local groups. It has done these things chiefly while being concerned about farming and home-making. It has ventured to some degree into recreation, chiefly in music and drama, and has experimented only slightly in literature and the fine arts.

A whole series of studies of the results of extension methods has been sponsored by the Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture. The report of Messrs. Baker and Wilson, previously referred to, giving data on methods used in 17 states, also goes into results in terms of the frequency with which practices have been changed and the relative costs per method. In terms of the testimony of farmers themselves in regard to changing of practices, it is found that the least expensive method is the use of news services, in the form of the use of the local press or the issuance of a local extension organ. Other low-cost methods are the circular letter, the general meeting, consultations at the office, bulletins, farm or home visits and leadership training institutes. The methods that are most costly, per practice changed, are the field demonstrations, correspondence, telephone calls, the special extension schools and exhibits, the last named being very expensive in terms of results.

A study of 3,954 farms in seven typical counties of four states (New York, Colorado, California, Iowa), revealed that on three farms out of four important changes of practices had been made as a result of contact with the extension service. Changed practices averaged 3.4 per farm. A slightly higher proportion of owners than tenants was reached by extension methods. Fifty-eight per cent of those changing one or more practices alleged that they had done so on being given an "object-lesson," although a larger proportion stated that they had changed one or more practices simply through reading, hearing addresses and attending group meetings where matters were under discussion.

In three of these states (New York, Colorado, California), farmers were classified in regard to their attitudes toward the extension service generally. Two-thirds were reported favorable, about one-fourth indifferent and the remainder as opposed or as expressing no opinion.

M. C. Wilson summarizes findings of numerous field studies of the results of extension teaching in 12 states with the following generalizations:

A unit of extension worker's time spent on preparing news stories and interviewing local editors influenced the adoption of three times as many practices as a corresponding unit of time spent on farm or home visits, and fifteen times as many practices as a unit of time devoted to extension exhibits.

A unit of time spent on farm and home visits was three-fourths as effective as a unit of time spent on general meetings and nearly twice as effective as a corresponding amount of time spent on demonstrations.

But the character of the subject matter limits to a considerable degree the kind of method that can be used. Sometimes a field demonstration must be used because of a local situation, even though it is more expensive, and will reach a smaller number of people.

#### ACTIVITIES OF FARM WOMEN

Home demonstration work has not been as widely organized as farm demonstration work. But it is found in every state and has great vitality and is of significance educationally because of the trends which are discernible. It had its origin in girls' club work in the South and was in its early days concerned with the production, preparation, and conservation of food. Later kitchen management came into the picture, then interior decoration, until the whole gamut of home management, including child care, was run. Some groups have gone out into community and public affairs.

Miss Grace Frysinger reports that extension workers are constantly meeting with more widespread information among women generally, more independent thinking, more frequently expressed desires for higher standards of living, more striving for release from things physical for the sake of things mental, more public demand for contacts and

social opportunities than was the case in the early stages of the work. In other words, a rapidly changing farm women citizen confronts the home demonstration worker. The professional worker with women is being called upon increasingly to be a parent educator. In the past home demonstration agents have won enthusiastic responses to a considerable degree because they had little competition for the interests of farm women. There is increasing concern and interest in family and public health, and the home demonstration work is called upon for health education.

A recent study made of the objectives of home demonstration leaders in 44 states by Miss Minnie Price of the Ohio Extension Service, reveals, as one would expect, a great variety of statements of purposes: The improvement of health; the development of attitudes, desires, appreciation; the development of lay leadership; improvement of the uses of leisure time; improvement of social and group relationships; child welfare; beautification; improvement of living standards. Thus it would appear that past stress on the skills of housekeeping has not made for the exclusion of the broader interests of home-making and of citizenship. In certain states, camps for farm women have been a feature. In others contests have stimulated interior decoration. Interest in landscaping and beautification is widespread.

A group of Columbia University graduate students who had had experience in working with women, recently pooled their information in regard to the expressed interests of those with whom they had had contact. According to these observers farm women have a steady interest in food production, conservation and preparation; in securing guidance as purchasers; in the management of budgets; in securing more leisure time; in striving for more social contacts and more friendships. They are fairly individualistic, but helpful to others in times of emergency. They are tremendously concerned about the welfare of

their children, and about their home grounds. They tend to be "cliquish," to be religiously reverent, to seek wider reading and to be acquiring new artistic and community interests. The many-sided task of being a teacher and an educational adviser of groups of farm women is at once apparent.

#### EXTENSION IN RURAL SOCIOLOGY

Twelve states are now carrying on programs of extension in rural sociology, which are mainly concerned with community organization and relationships. The group of workers on this project have recently formulated their objectives in concise fashion. They are quoted here as evidence of the interest of a group of extension workers in social planning and as an illustration of the fact that extension workers are thinking carefully about their objectives:

The general objectives in Agricultural Extension have been stated as . . . diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical information on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same. More adequate incomes, the coöperative spirit, the wise use of leisure time, and higher standards of life are the results to be desired.

Rural sociology extension contributes to the attainment of these general objectives by developing with rural people the science and art of living and of working in groups, through assisting them in:

1. Analyzing their larger community situations;
2. Thinking through the principles underlying their group relationships;
3. Discovering needed adjustments;
4. Planning for desired improvements;
5. Developing practical methods of procedure;
6. Applying these methods.

This development is concerned with individual adjustments and with such group adjustments as:

1. The family group in its inner and outer relationships;
2. Voluntary interest group relationships, e.g., farmer clubs and associations, recreational groups, etc.);

3. Coöperative group relationships (e.g., membership morale);
4. Town and country relations;
5. Local governmental groups in relation to tax supported institutions, (e.g., schools, libraries, hospitals, public welfare, etc.);
6. The individual and the group in relation to their cultural environment.

The general objective is to stimulate specific activities contributing to the development of human values and rural talent, and to assist rural people in developing and coördinating their various groups and institutions in relation to their priority and emphasis in community building.

#### EMPHASES IN STATE PROGRAMS

Great variety in state extension programs is evident. This is due not only to differing types of farming, climate, typography, etc., but also to differing philosophies of education and of social relationships. No comparisons are attempted in this chapter, but a few generalizations are made. There is no attempt to make mention of all the states, and only random selections are made.

In West Virginia, the program has come to be known for its broad country life interests, the close coöperation with the rural church, pioneering efforts at improving rural-urban relations, the use of community scoring as a teaching device, coöperative planning with other state agencies. In Iowa the Extension Service literally built the state Farm Bureau, and is closely linked with it in rendering its services. Throughout the North and the West, the Farm Bureau grew up around the county agent. Even when an organization of lay persons is developed, it is nevertheless the duty of extension workers to serve all people impartially.

In Virginia, the Extension Service has taken the lead in organizing county councils of agricultural leaders and in organizing a state Institute of Rural Affairs, which meets annually and has become well known throughout the coun-

try for its public discussion of important rural issues and policies.

In New York and Illinois, for example, separately organized Home Bureaus have been developed among the farm women. Throughout the Southern states there are home demonstration clubs for women, and various other states including North Dakota, Missouri and California, have well-defined local organizations of women known as homemakers clubs, rural neighborhood clubs, farm home departments of farm bureaus, etc. In other states there is strong opinion against separate organizations for women.

In the South, extension work has generally been developed without as close local association with farmers' organizations as in the North and West. In Louisiana and Missouri, for example, considerable emphasis is given to community organization and the coördination of all community activities.

In a group of states, strong programs of parent education have been developed, which are described in Chapter VII.

Illinois has sponsored an Art Extension Movement. Wisconsin has made "all the state a stage" through its amateur dramatic tournaments, and other states have emphasized dramatics, described in Chapter X. There is a wide experience in the use of the radio, which is dealt with in Chapter XI.

#### EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION OF EXTENSION WORKERS

In 1928, a group of workers met at Urbana, Illinois, to plan for a national educational organization expected to become the "N.E.A." for agricultural extension. Subsequent meetings resulted in the adoption of a plan and constitution for the "National Coöperative Extension Workers' Association." At a meeting held in Chicago in December, 1931, it was reported that workers in about half the states had signified approval and that as soon as groups

of workers in twenty-four states would ratify the national organization, it would function. Steps have been taken to incorporate the organization. The organization will have as its purpose the improvement of standards of professional training and service for extension work, and the discussion of educational problems and policies.

#### RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER AGENCIES

So diverse and extensive an educational movement as Agricultural Extension could not but have some difficult problems of relationships. Of first importance are those with the Federal Board for Vocational Education which assists high schools in establishing departments for teaching agriculture and home-making, known as Smith-Hughes work, which was described in Chapter IV. There is a memorandum of understanding between "Smith-Hughes and Smith-Lever" but in certain local areas there is considerable competition. On paper, the zones agreed upon do not seem to overlap—Smith-Hughes work is for adults in the classroom, following a prescribed course; Smith-Lever work is for adults not in schools and organized around demonstrations or in informal groups. Furthermore, Smith-Lever work has made large use of the volunteer. But in actual practice, with the expansion of Smith-Hughes work among adults, competition arises. Teachers in high schools bid for students in areas where extension work has been organized and the necessity for both types is not always apparent.

Relations with "University Extension" are sometimes a problem, although in a few states statesmanlike adjustments have been made with profit to all. In Wisconsin, the Agricultural Extension Service encourages cultural interests and calls upon the University Extension Service for the professional assistance it needs, for example, for the actual teaching of classes. The Oregon Agricultural College undertakes to carry in its extension program what-

ever of its resident teaching program the rural people wish. In New York, the Agricultural Extension Service wishes to undertake a full program of cultural services, and has no competition from the College of Liberal Arts in Cornell, but does not have the financial resources at present for expansion. Generally, University Extension and Agricultural Extension have quite different administrative set-ups. Usually the former is financed largely by fees, whereas the latter is not. Interchange of staff seems practically impossible. But division of labor and understanding between administrators such as have been achieved in a few states point the way for more complete extension services to the rural people of the nation.

#### EMERGING PROBLEMS

Although almost thirty years old, extension work is still largely a pioneering enterprise. Wise national administration has permitted variety in state programs, which has made for considerable experimentation. There has been a steady expansion, even during the first part of the depression of 1929-32. But there are important problems pressing for attention.

Viewed in the large, one of the most important from the standpoint of public policy is the attention being given to production. It has been said, with considerable evidence to support it, that the Federal Government has supported one arm which encouraged heavy production—the extension service; and another to dispose of surpluses and to discourage heavy production because of poor markets—the Federal Farm Board. This patent inconsistency in public policy has existed, although the extension service is now struggling with marketing, has coöperated with the Farm Board, and is engaged in studying “adjustment programs” with large numbers of farmers.

Times of depression will probably not bring any expansion but sooner or later means should be found, it is thought

by many agricultural leaders, to make extension services available to all farmers. Increasing state and Federal participation are being urged as the most promising methods.

The training and recruiting of professional leadership is still a major problem. In the beginning the Extension Service "just grewed." Admittedly and inevitably training has often been opportunist. Standards are evolving, however, and the general requirement for men and women county agents is graduation from an accredited institution, with a major in agriculture or home economics, and with two or more years of successful experience. Increasingly the states are employing as subject-matter specialists only persons who have Masters' degrees and who have really specialized in a particular interest. There is still need for improving methods of recruiting workers and for better planning of the training of professional workers.

Relationships between Smith-Hughes and Smith-Lever work still need systematic attention. The needs of the people to be served are the paramount consideration. Adjustments of Federal, state, and local services are still required for better understanding and lessening of competition.

A constant problem is the improvement of the teaching by the volunteer leaders, particularly the development of simple and adequate teaching materials.

Developed as a vocational service, the extension system faces now the problem of also providing social and cultural resources to the volunteer leaders and to others. How far should the extension service expand its social and cultural services? Should it attempt them at all? Can the same professional leader give a variety of services? Can a coördinated social and economic program be worked out? It is the view of the authors of this book that the extension service can render a variety of services through sufficient specialization on the state staffs. But opinions differ on this point. On this as on other questions, experimentation

in some of the 48 states will probably be revealing of what the possibilities are.

Sharp thinking, looking toward more precise statements of philosophies of extension work, and toward the ultimate integration of agricultural extension with other forms of education is urgently needed. The problem of keeping the program plastic and at the same time definite and effective is a constant one.

## CHAPTER VI

### UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE EXTENSION

*The ultimate aim is to take the best to the last man and the last woman on the last farm.*—KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD.

It was "Farm and Home Week" at the state university. The president was giving the annual reception. In the line was a farm-reared teacher who put an unusual question to the president, as follows: "What is the purpose of a state university?" The president was prepared with a reply. Withdrawing for a moment from the reception line, he said in substance: "The students on this campus are not the main concern of the university. If they were not these students, there would be others. The purpose of a university is to carry the arts and learning, the findings of science to the remote communities of the state."

In this chapter we consider certain important services rendered to rural communities by institutions of higher learning other than the agricultural college programs just described. These services are maintained by three types of institutions, private colleges, state teachers colleges and state universities. By far the most extensive services available to rural groups are those of the state universities.

#### THE EXTENT OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

The idea of university extension came to the United States from England. At first there was much opposition in academic circles and early experiments were merely tol-

erated. Soon it entered into an era of great enthusiasm, followed by a reaction, then into a period of steady development and expansion. Wisconsin was the pioneer state institution, beginning work in 1892, and organizing a separate department in 1906. Between 1906 and 1913, university extension departments were established in 28 institutions and reorganized in 21. The National University Extension Association was organized in 1915 at a meeting held at the University of Wisconsin. In general the functions of university extension departments are to take to extra-mural students cultural advantages offered in residence, to disseminate widely the knowledge gained in research and investigation, to serve as a clearing house of information and educational guidance.

L. R. Alderman, specialist in adult education in the United States Office of Education, published in 1930 the results of a study of the activities of 443 institutions which reported for the academic year 1928-29, in the bulletin *College and University Extension Helps in Adult Education*. Questionnaires were sent to 1,220 institutions; replies were received from over 800, of which 443 reported some extension services. Mr. Alderman makes the generalization that extension activities have been reaching an "ever-increasing number of persons," during the past three decades. "Wherever the mails go, university extension may be had, and where a sufficient number of persons in a community desire to study the same subject, in all probability an instructor of some college or university may be found to guide them. . . . Work done by extension, either through correspondence study or in classes outside of the institution, may be credited toward a degree in many colleges and universities. . . . In general, institutions that offer services of this nature permit one-fourth to one-half of the work necessary for a bachelor's degree to be earned by correspondence. . . ." The following table has been constructed from the data in Mr. Alderman's study:

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES 1928-29

TYPE OF SERVICE	NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONS
Correspondence Courses . . . . .	149
Class Instruction off Campus . . . . .	272
Extension Classes on Campus . . . . .	273
Instruction by Radio . . . . .	45
Institutes, Conferences, Short Courses . . . . .	166
Library Service . . . . .	177
Public Lectures . . . . .	229
Home Reading Courses . . . . .	37
Visual Instruction Aids:	
Lantern Slides . . . . .	135
Films . . . . .	91
Mounted Pictures . . . . .	63
Unmounted Pictures . . . . .	56
Educational Publications . . . . .	126
Parent Teacher Association Services . . . . .	133
Services to other Clubs . . . . .	112
Community Drama . . . . .	105
Promotion of Debates . . . . .	191

Statistics on enrollments in correspondence study and in extension classes are also given. A total of 108,901 students were enrolled in correspondence study, and 250,235 in extension classes.

Unfortunately, there are no statistics available in regard to the use of the services outlined above by persons resident in rural communities. Participation by rural people varies considerably in the states. It is evident, however, that all of the services offered are used by rural individuals and groups; that some are particularly needed by those living at a distance from the centers of population; and that others are particularly designed for rural communities.

As has been noted in the previous chapter, agricultural and university extension are usually financed by different methods—the former without charge and the latter with fees which defray part of all of the cost of the instruction. For a more thorough study of university extension, the reader is referred to *The University Afield* by Alfred L. Hall-Quest.

## CORRESPONDENCE STUDY

Correspondence study, probably more needed in rural than in urban areas, was offered in over 200 subjects by the one hundred and forty-nine colleges and universities reporting to Mr. Alderman. One hundred and eleven of these institutions report that correspondence study is available to persons residing anywhere; the others restrict their services to the state in which the institution is located. Experience indicates that correspondence instruction is easily adapted to the needs of the student; he may advance as rapidly as his abilities warrant; because all lessons are written, the student acquires practice in written expression. A wider range of subjects is available for the correspondence student than for the student in the extension class, which is dependent upon the enlistment of a group of people who desire to pursue the same subject. Mr. Alderman's pamphlet lists the subjects offered by the various institutions. A thorough treatment of experience in correspondence study is now available in the new book by W. S. Bittner and H. F. Mallory entitled *University Teaching by Mail*.

## EXTENSION CLASSES

In practically all of the states are found some institutions which give regular classroom work outside of their own walls. A frequent rule of institutions offering such work is that a minimum of 10 or 15 persons must enroll. The 291 institutions reporting about 250,000 students in 1928-29 maintained their classes very largely in urban centers. The most largely attended classes for rural adults are those in the agricultural departments of high schools maintained with the assistance of Smith-Hughes funds, described in Chapter IV. As was noted there, enrollments of adults in classes in agriculture and in home economics have been increasing.

## NEWS LETTERS

A unique university extension activity is the news letter, which meets a particular need of the country weekly and of the other newspapers which are largely read by rural dwellers.

The one published by the University of North Carolina, edited for a long time by E. C. Branson, carried in 1932 the mark of "Vol. XVIII." It has therefore profited by long experience and has been able to test thoroughly the kinds of materials which appear in it. It is at present being published bi-weekly. An examination of typical issues published during the years 1931 and 1932 reveals for example, the following:

Interpretations of 1930 Agricultural Census Data for North Carolina and the United States, including comparisons between North Carolina and other states and between counties in the states.

A story of the work of the Farmer's Federation of Western North Carolina, describing its successful experience in co-operative buying and selling.

Discussions of the reorganization of county government.

The history and accomplishments of the National Grange, with membership statistics from 1881 to 1931.

The population of North Carolina, Urban and Rural, 1890-1930.

A Suggested Tax Program.

Farm Tenure by Races in North Carolina.

In 1932, the University of Oregon began the publication of the *Oregon Community News* on a monthly basis. It specializes in news about a great variety of community organizations in the State. Vol. 1, No. 1 reports that the University has direct contact with over 300 communities, of which many have community houses. The activities described in the first few numbers are mainly those of rural areas. The monthly publication becomes a clearing house for numerous clubs, granges, and lodges. Even in times of

depression, there is news about the building of a new community house. Numerous public schools have become community centers.

By purchase and by gift over 800 recently published books have been obtained by the University of Virginia for the special purpose of providing reading advantages for rural residents. A library of 100,000 standard volumes is steadily drawn upon, but naturally most readers are interested in current literature, and the 800 are chiefly the sum of a few carefully selected titles added each month during the past three years. They are a genuine cross section of the "recent best" in American letters. In Virginia two special publicity services are available to newspapers. One under the topic of "The Mind in Motion" is published weekly, and deals with a variety of topics in adult education. The following excerpts illustrate the materials published in clip sheets.

Even before the shouting and tumult dies and the kings of debate are crowned, the industrialization of the South has been selected, by a vote just completed, as the subject for next year. The exact wording is: Resolved, That the South's future prosperity lies in legally regulated industry. The meaning of "future prosperity" and "legally regulated industry" is given in an explanatory statement.

A college education in the old home town, wherever in Virginia it is located, has become possible through the coöperation of fifteen colleges and universities of the State in a joint program of adult education. A group of fifteen people gathered together almost anywhere for almost any study can make arrangements for a competent instructor to meet them at regular intervals.

Another news letter is entitled *The Book Sampler*, of which a few quotations from recent issues follow:

Gamaliel Bradford has gained an enviable reputation as a writer of biographies, and a new book of his needs no recommendation. *The Quick and the Dead*, a series of sketches of seven of the most interesting, if not the greatest men of our age, is quite up to the best of Mr. Bradford's work. A book

which you should read, but more than that, one which you will enjoy.

Visit your local book-shop; browse around the town library. If you don't find these books there, you may examine them as a loan from the Extension Department, University, Virginia.

If you are concerned with what is happening in the field of modern literature, and with what is being done by individual literary figures, you will find *Axel's Castle*, by Edmund Wilson, of much worth. The book is not dry nor boring, but clear writing and good criticism. The author begins with a few remarks on Romanticism and Classicism in poetry; takes up Symbolism in France and then comes back to America and Ireland and leaves us with a rather clear idea of what some of these modern authors are trying to do.

Books to while away idle hours, books for serious study, books for specific information—all are at your service. Write for lists of new books to lend, or send a request for old or new books to the Extension Department, University, Virginia.

#### THE PACKAGE LIBRARY

Another service of peculiar value to rural communities is the package library. It is particularly needed in the rural areas because they do not generally have local library service. The University of Virginia reports the functions of its library bureau to be: "To assemble information and reference material on subjects of current interest for the use of organizations or individuals requesting such data. The material is furnished at a nominal charge for postage and packing. Clippings from a number of newspapers and magazines of general appeal are filed, and bulletins of national and state organizations collected."

The University of Wisconsin, which has maintained the package library on a thorough plan, reports that 75 per cent of the communities using them have no local public library facilities. Among the subjects in which there has been considerable interest recently are: instalment selling, biography, agriculture and rural life, chain stores, conservation, child welfare, music, international relations, crime and punishment.

The package library generally includes clippings and pamphlets, not books, and is not to be confused with the small traveling library, described in Chapter III. The University of Oklahoma reported recently that it had available over 15,000 selected articles from newspapers, pamphlets and periodicals for use in package libraries. Loans are made for a period of two weeks, with the privilege of a three weeks renewal. The borrower pays postage both ways, otherwise the service is free to residents of Oklahoma. The announcement dated November 1, 1931, lists over 2,000 "package library subjects." Other state universities than those mentioned in this section maintain package library service.

#### LIBRARY SERVICE

The Alderman report of 1930 indicates that "library service is granted to the public by 177 colleges and universities in 45 states." Particularly in certain states where there is no state-wide library system is this service of great use to the public. In states having state-wide systems, college and university libraries tend to render a more specialized service.

#### STUDY GUIDES FOR CLUBS

Courses for group study are as yet not so widely developed as other services. The University of Wisconsin offers its services to women's clubs and other groups which wish to plan programs for a year or for a season. Outlines are available in the following subjects:

##### EDUCATION

Parental Guidance and Education  
Problems of Child Training

##### HISTORY

Age of Knighthood  
Egyptian

French Art and Literature  
Greek Art and Literature  
Recent United States  
Representative Americans  
Roman

#### HOME ECONOMICS

#### LITERATURE

Browning  
Contemporary Drama  
Contemporary Novel  
Novel of the Nineteenth Century  
Shakespeare  
The Short Story

#### PHILOSOPHY

#### POLITICAL SCIENCE

American Diplomacy  
Citizenship and Government  
Pan-Americanism  
Political Parties and Practical Politics  
Municipal Progress  
United States and World Politics

The announcement of the University states: "The outlines carry with them, first, the privilege of direction, guidance and assistance by the professor or instructor who has outlined the work; and, second, the opportunity of at least one lecture, and in many cases a series given by the same person. . . . A close, practical connection is established between any group of citizens in any part of the state, organized for serious purposes, and the state university."

#### HOME READING

Thirty-seven institutions reported to the Office of Education that they provided home reading courses in 1928-29. Not all of these have arranged courses of their own, but give assistance to those wishing to follow guides prepared by the United States Office of Education, or those of the

American Library Association in the "Reading With a Purpose" series.

An illustration is a recent announcement from the University of Minnesota. Guidance is given in regard to four kinds of reading: professional and vocational, casual and recreational, informative, cultural. Reading may be supplemented by correspondence study, or pictures or slides. The Extension Division of the University grants a certificate on completion of reading courses. Another illustration is an outline of a course in home reading in the novel, published by the extension service of the South Dakota State College. The course is opened with directions for choosing a novel for study, followed by methods of evaluating novels. The first novel suggested for study is *A Lantern in her Hand*, by Bess Streeter Aldrich. After this has been read, *Giants in the Earth* by O. E. Rølvaag is suggested for purposes of comparison. A list of thirty-two other novels is given for further study, including many of the important works of rural fiction. Nine "books about books" are listed for use in the study. Detailed suggestions on how to borrow books are given.

#### OTHER ACTIVITIES

The University of Wisconsin, among others, is at present emphasizing continuing education opportunities for high school students who because of economic conditions can not continue their education and can not find employment.

Lectures by faculty members are a conventional form of service for the college and the university. In the Alderman report 229 institutions reported some systematic service to organizations of various kinds. "Visual Aids" were offered by 134 institutions, and the number was rapidly increasing.

Certain programs of university extension departments in radio education; in cultural arts, including dramatics;

and in parental education are described in succeeding chapters on these topics.

Mr. Alderman reports "a growing tendency for educational institutions to combine their efforts in extension work." The coöperative work in Virginia has already been referred to. The Connecticut Board of Education provides for services to local study groups from the faculties of nine institutions as well as from members of the staff of the State Board. In Massachusetts practically all of the universities and colleges coöperate closely with the State Department of Education. "The University of Oregon has for some time had coöperative arrangements with other educational institutions in the State, so that a wide range of opportunities is available."

## CHAPTER VII

### PARENT EDUCATION

*The development of personality is the highest product of civilization.*—LIBERTY HYDE BAILEY.

PARENTHOOD has been described by a highly selected group of mothers, all members of two honorary societies of college home economics students, as their chief anxiety, the main cause of fatigue, a major source of friction, and the aspect of their lives in regard to which they needed most guidance.

"Parent education," says Sidonie M. Gruenberg, of the Child Study Association, "is a manifestation of the concern which adults normally feel for the welfare of their children combined with a new faith in the value of intelligence for practical purposes. . . . Parent education . . . implies educational help in the continuous meeting of ever new problems, in the continuous adjustment to a changing social world, in the continuous development of attitudes and philosophies in relation to other human beings."

Parent education, perhaps more than any other form of adult education in the United States, is manifesting elements of folk movement, thinks E. C. Lindeman. He goes on to say that parent education, a term which has been used only for about a decade, "appeals to a special group in terms of a special function," and is in reality "a mode of cultural adjustment." Cultural changes are bringing about "stirrings of a new family mode," and new "conceptions of family functions are in the air," with the result that "education for parenthood is rapidly becoming a reality."

For more than a generation there has been a rising in-

terest in child welfare. The twentieth century has been called the century of the child. Inevitably, because of the adjustments forced upon them, parents have sought guidance in regard to the understanding of their own children, in regard to their nurture and training. There has been a widespread movement to study child psychology, which Dorothy Canfield Fisher has described as "one of the most widespread, enlightened, advanced, thorough and interesting efforts of the American democracy to learn what it needs." But parents as students have become so largely preoccupied with the affairs of children that Mr. Lindeman recently warned that "this peculiarly American concentration upon childhood may be the sign of bankrupt adulthood." He believes that parent education may and should become "the point of departure for a thoroughgoing inventory of the qualities of adult experience in this modern world."

#### EVIDENCES OF NEED OF RURAL PARENT EDUCATION

Recently certain studies have been made of the status of rural children that bring out the basic need for parent education in rural life. An illustration of these studies, probably the most thorough of them, is that of farm children made by a group of investigators attached to the staff of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station at the University of Iowa. It is an inventory of the social and educational advantages and disadvantages of family and community life in two Iowa communities. These communities represented, in many ways, rural life at its best. There were evident no problems of juvenile delinquency. Crime was almost unknown. Parents were determined to give their children a more thorough education than they themselves had received.

Mothers tended to be more interested in the welfare of pre-school children than in older boys and girls, yet for the most part little children had no specially prepared food.

Most mothers made no attempt to guard children against childhood diseases. "Regularity of habits was not stressed in most homes. . . . Care of the teeth frequently was neglected. . . . Most of the children had definite chores to do and were an integral part of a family organization that moved with a slow and regular rhythm. Undisturbed by distracting influences of numerous activities, they had time to assimilate those elements in their environment that were pleasant and beneficial."

But these farm children were "surrounded by certain influences that were not to their advantage, as judged by standards of child welfare. Their greatest obstacle was the one-room school, which study has shown to be far from desirable as an educational institution. The children in one-room schools were either aloof and shy or boisterous and rude when meeting strangers. . . . They were noticeably lacking in self-confidence and poise. Many . . . did not know how to play, and lack of equipment and leadership prevented any stimulation of the play spirit. For each of these conditions the cause was seen in the immediate environment. The schools were the direct reflection of the ideals and ambitions of the parents. With lack of cultural appreciation in a majority of homes, there was little effort to seek teachers who embodied these ideals."

#### RURAL PROGRAMS IN EDUCATION FOR PARENTHOOD

The beginnings of parent education as a phase of rural adult education were coincident with the rise of farmers' institutes and the development of state and federal extension services. During those early years it was not known as "parent education," but it dealt to some extent with problems of child nurture and family life which constitute today a very important aspect of the modern parent education movement.

The development of this public service to parents was distinct from the efforts of private groups interested in

child study which began during the early part of the nineteenth century, and after spreading spontaneously for fifty years or more, culminated in the organization of private parent associations. The Child Study Association of America, the National Congress of Parents and Teachers and the American Association of University Women are outgrowths of the more urban interests.

During the World War facilities for reaching rural families with education in child care and other aspects of home economics were greatly enlarged. Following the war, scientific research in child development stimulated it still further and began to provide a basis for an understanding of the rôle of the parent in the education and growth of the child. This was further augmented by the findings of psychiatry and psychology and the genetic approach to the study of personality.

About the close of the war, the term parental education became a part of educational terminology and almost overnight professional and lay workers in some twenty-five or thirty different fields and types of agencies became aware that they were engaged in teaching parents. In the years that followed, child study, which had been concerned largely with the welfare of the child, shifted its emphasis to the needs and possibilities of the parent. Parent study groups increased by the hundreds and later by thousands in all parts of the country, literature emerged from scores of sources and soon the rapidly growing phase of the movement was well under way.

#### THE COÖPERATIVE EXTENSION PROGRAM

During all this period the Coöperative Extension Service was carrying on the most extensive rural program in parent education and one which tended to reflect the emphases first on child study and later on parent development. As an expression of this interest, eleven states have recently employed specialists on the state staffs, of whom two were

giving only part time to parental education and child care. Several other states wish to employ such state specialists, but do not have the funds to do so. The state specialists work through or in coöperation with the county extension agents, usually the women agents in home economics. Commonly the state specialists train the lay leaders of groups of adults who carry on educational projects.

Child care and parent education are regarded by extension administrators as still in the pioneering stage. Among the objectives noted in annual reports of the specialists are the following: "To make parents aware of child needs for optimal health and emotional stability, and improve practices of child rearing in the home; to foster an understanding attitude between parents and children, and greater satisfaction and happiness in the parent child relationship; to teach fundamental principles of habit-formation and convince parents that there are general principles behind methods; to help parents meet behavior problems in childhood and incidentally in themselves; to promote community activity in child betterment by raising community ideals of child and family life."

Actual situations presented by rural home-makers have guided the specialists in preparing outlines for discussion, for certain states have, as a matter of policy, concentrated their programs on the development of the pre-school child. In others the main attention has been given to the behavior problems of boys and girls of school age. A majority of the states arrange projects on the basis of five to eight meetings. Topics of projects in the various states are as follows: "Constructive relationships within the family; standards and requirements of good physical growth; habit formation; emotions and attitudes; discipline and common behavior problems; play, play equipment, toys, books; the use of money; sex education."

The teaching methods generally reported are combinations of informal lecture, questions and discussions; re-

ports on observations of children's behavior in the home; reports on reading; illustrative materials and exhibits of such as toys, books, furniture, clothing; demonstrations of results by lay women. It is reported that only a very small proportion of groups were attended by fathers as well as by mothers, and that problems of local group organization are still very great. The interests of women tend to be diverse, even in a small rural community. Lay leaders prepared to do a competent assignment in parental education are hard to find or to enlist in many areas. Some states which rely on lay leaders in teaching other subjects hesitate to trust child care and education for parenthood to them, while others have forged ahead by using farm homemakers as teachers and leaders in local projects.

Georgia has specialized in the organization of a special library for leaders in this work. In Iowa, each study group elects a librarian who is responsible for collecting clippings, pictures, pamphlets, books and demonstration material for the use of the group at meetings. In a county in Massachusetts, women from nineteen towns were brought together for training as an organizing committee which interpreted the work to their communities. In Missouri, four counties have held clinics in child guidance.

The growth of the work is illustrated by recent statistics indicating that adult groups completed 8,621 projects in child training and care in 1930 and 14,007 in 1931.

#### A COUNTY PROGRAM

The methods of organizing parent education in Illinois, by the agricultural extension service, have been selected to illustrate a county program. In Illinois parent education is organized in 24 counties through the home demonstration workers. Study groups are organized when a sufficient number of adults show an interest in some aspect of parent education. A minimum of twenty persons is required for each group. It has been found best through

experience, to organize study groups in accordance with the age of the children of the parents attending; for example, to enroll those vitally interested in the pre-school child in a study group which will be confined to the needs of the younger children; and so on for the older age groups, specializing again on the adolescents. Parents of children of all ages may, however, enroll for a project in family relationships. As soon as enrollment is assured, the county worker makes arrangements for the state specialist to meet with the group, to lead the first session and succeeding sessions, to introduce the outlines of courses available, to arrange for demonstrations in the home. All local arrangements are handled by the county agent and her volunteer advisers. It is made clear that the purpose of the project is not to have a specialist inform the lay persons how to care for children, but rather to assist them in studying their own homes, in pooling their experiences and in making available to them such results of scientific research as bear upon their own problems. A "book chairman" is elected to secure or borrow reading materials. In Illinois, specialists have done the teaching themselves, but small groups of individuals who have attended the courses wish to organize for further study, and at present an experiment in the training of lay leaders is being tried.

#### PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

Parent education was stated to be one of the main objectives of the Congress of Mothers, organized in 1897, which later became the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Although parents' associations and parent-teacher associations are largely urban for the country as a whole, they are extensively organized in the rural areas of certain states. Statistics compiled by the National Congress in 1930 indicated that fifteen states had 1,154 rural associations. Most states do not have their statistics regarding local organizations and membership divided into

rural and urban categories. One of the officers of the National Congress reports a tendency for the "tiny" parent teacher association to disappear and that the most promising rural associations are those in connection with consolidated schools or with town or village high schools.

The National Congress publishes a small pamphlet on parent education which gives a sketch of the interest of the organization in the enterprise and instructions in regard to the organization of local study groups. It is stated that there are many methods of organizing study groups. Frequently the group consists of all of the members of the local association and appropriate subjects are considered at the regular monthly meeting. Again, only a certain portion of the membership may be interested in pursuing systematic study in a special group which meets separately from the local association. Locals are advised not to start a study group in parent education until they are assured of competent leadership. "The basis for a successful study group is a sufficient number of parents interested in studying child development and parent-child relations and a good leader."

When the leader is not a specialist or professionally trained, the use of a standard text or study course is recommended. The journal of the Congress, *Child Welfare*, published monthly, has for some time outlined one or more books each year. The outlines published in the magazine give directions to the study group leader. "The purpose of these groups is to learn more about the general principles of child rearing and care, in order to understand children's behavior more fully and to develop techniques for meeting the situations which arise in the average home. Both the lecture method, and informal group discussion are recommended. Such topics as character reading, discipline, obedience, emotional control, good and bad habits, sex education, are of interest, no matter what the age of the children."

Schools for parents have been conducted in certain localities, usually at educational institutions, with the co-operation of local, or state parent-teacher associations.

The National Congress has recently expanded its consultation services in parent education to state organizations that wish to improve existing programs. A publication program is also under way. Materials for meetings and bibliographies are made available. Three *Parent Education Yearbooks* have been issued. These *Yearbooks* have been so arranged that local groups can make use of them. They are planned to cover some aspect of parent education thoroughly each year. The Congress gives special attention to parent education in the publication of leaflets. The Congress urges elementary school teachers and principals to take courses in parent education, and encourages exhibits of books on the subject at public libraries.

The Congress has published a pamphlet giving source material for the use of rural parent-teacher association units. It maintains a Bureau of Rural Life whose purpose is to give advice and assistance to the rural units, and to co-operate with other agencies in various endeavors for rural improvement. It has stated its objectives as follows: "To promote child welfare in the rural home, school, church and community; to raise the standards of rural home life; to bring into closer relation the rural home and school so that parents and teachers may coöperate intelligently in the training of the child; to develop between those interested in rural education and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child living in the open country the highest advantages in physical, mental, moral and spiritual education."

#### THE FEDERAL BOARD FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Smith-Hughes classes for adults in home-making in high schools, described in Chapter IV, have since the establish-

ment of the work in 1917 given attention to child care and family relationships. It is reported that adult women taking courses in foods and clothing naturally developed special interests in the needs of children. Discussions of the proper foods and clothing easily led to child psychology and behavior problems of children. Classes in home management are reported to be increasing in number, and units on child management and family relationships are frequently incorporated in them. The Federal Board published in 1919, jointly with the Children's Bureau, a widely used Bulletin entitled *Child Care and Child Welfare*, now being revised. It was prepared for the use of senior students in colleges and universities who were planning to teach home economics. It has had a wider circulation than any other publication of the Board.

The following tendencies in activities are reported. Materials used are becoming less technical, and the actual needs of children in the home and problems of parent-child relationships are being stressed. There is an increasing interest in intellectual and emotional questions, in contrast to the early attention to things physical. In the beginning women only enrolled in the courses. Now men are attending mixed classes or requesting separate classes. Parent education classes are limited to persons over 16 years of age. Groups range in size from twelve to thirty or forty, and meet for a session of about an hour and a half to two hours a week (in exceptional cases twice a week). Meeting times vary, in accordance with the convenience of the group. Activities in parent education are at present mainly carried on in five states.

#### THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF PARENT EDUCATION

In 1925 the National Council of Parent Education was formed, with headquarters in New York, by representatives of 15 agencies carrying on projects in parent education. Since that time other organizations have been af-

filiated, until now there are more than 60. Included in the Council are departments of colleges and universities, national associations with special interests in parent education, government departments, periodicals, research agencies, nursery schools, and others with more highly specialized purposes.

The Council was established as a means of bringing professional leaders engaged in some aspect of parent education into vital touch with one another through opportunities to confer together with respect to the needs of the field. It is especially concerned with providing advisory service to new projects and in stimulating the training of professional leaders. It studies materials, methods and results of work carried on. It conducts conferences and holds regular meetings of representatives of member agencies, publishes important information in the area of interest of its constituents. Considerable attention has been given to the selection of candidates for advanced study, and the promotion of leadership training.

## CHAPTER VIII

### RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS

*The marriage of heaven and earth was foretold by the ancient prophets. I have seen no sign of that union taking place, but I have been led to speculate how they might be brought within hailing distance of one another.*

—GEORGE W. RUSSELL (AE).

IN a Middle Western town there was a special announcement in the church one Sunday morning. The minister told of the plan for a series of forums to be held in the church on the taxation of farm property. His conversations with farmers had revealed that the tax burden was one of their main concerns. He had read a statement by a well-known economist that farmers were more heavily taxed in proportion to their incomes than any other group. It was the duty of townsmen as well as farmers to consider the social and human costs of this undue tax burden. If it was true, as some alleged, that in the United States farmers were being taxed out of existence, then they should all know why it was so, and what could be done to change a situation that was destroying rural life. The series of forums was held. Lay and professional persons led them. Farmers and townspeople attended them in large numbers. When they were over the editor of the local paper wrote an editorial thanking the minister for an important service in educating a community. The story indicates what a small but increasing number of rural ministers and churches are doing by way of adult education in regard to important human issues.

## THE COUNTRY CHURCH AS IT IS

The relation of religious organizations to the adult education movement is one of the most difficult topics to treat at the present time. Many adults are in the churches, rural and urban. The educational function of the church is emphasized by the leadership of all religious bodies. The pulpit has educational as well as other functions. Numerous church schools are in session week by week, and in a considerable portion of them classes of adults meet. A variety of educational material is appearing from publishing houses of all sorts, denominational and independent, on such topics as peace and war, parenthood, social and economic problems. Within recent years, when the churches have expanded their relief activities beyond any previous limits, there has appeared on all sides a rising tide of interest in the ethical aspects of the economic situation. Study outlines on unemployment have been prepared especially for use in church groups. But in general it must be said of the local rural churches, Catholic and Protestant, just as one observes in considering the local public schools, that only minorities of these institutions have as yet begun to think of doing serious work in adult education.

As noted in Chapter I, the church constituencies in most rural communities are mainly those in what is known as the middle-of-the-road Protestant groups. Left wing Protestantism, Anglicanism, or Roman Catholicism are not found so extensively in rural areas, although in certain areas they all have vitality and numbers. The Roman Catholic leadership in the United States has during the past decade shown an increasing interest in rural life, and there are many in the Catholic Church who hold that good churchmanship calls for the maintenance of strong rural parishes.

Generally speaking, the condition of the country church is a reflection of the lack of statesmanship of a pioneering

era, and of a national economy which has neglected agriculture. The trends of American life have taken so much wealth and leadership out of rural communities that the village and country church could not but have been seriously affected. The ministry consists largely of young men or old men. In some regions the country churches frequently have "student pastors." Many of these are unsupervised students who serve the church as a meal ticket while studying in theological seminaries. Tenure in the rural ministry is insecure, and rapidly shifting leadership has become the typical situation. Salaries are generally much lower than in the towns and cities, and during the past few years all the available evidence indicates that rural ministers' salaries have been reduced by a much larger proportion than those of men in city pulpits. By far the most promising development on the horizon, so far as adult education as well as other aspects of the work of the churches is concerned, is the improvement and expansion of training courses now being offered by about ten of the leading theological seminaries. Literally a new rural ministry, bent on social engineering, and with faith in education is being trained in small numbers. If these persons are permitted to remain in the rural church, the story of the relation of the rural church to adult education may soon be a far different one from what it is today.

#### THE LARGER PARISH MOVEMENT

Notice should be taken of the spread of a movement to reorganize rural church work into larger units so as to permit division of labor among the professional leaders. This has come to be known as the "larger parish plan," and grows out of a recognition that with improved means of transportation and communication the large numbers of small churches, located within walking distance of farm homes, are no longer necessary. The word "larger" is loosely used. It is simply an expression of the idea that

the traditional small unit no longer suffices. The larger parish plan is in use by both Catholic and Protestant churches. Within Protestantism, its implications are far reaching, because there has been no unified theory of parish work at all comparable with that of the Catholic Church. Again, a larger parish may be denominational or inter-denominational. It calls for the church considering responsibility for the people of an area, rather than those of a particular constituency. In most cases, it means that a staff of workers is employed. Frequently, one member of the staff, usually the director of the parish, has charge of the services for worship; another takes responsibility for religious education; another for boys' or girls' work, or recreation or a social program in the parish. Larger parishes have not yet been organized in great numbers, but the movement seems to be gaining strength. The unfavorable economic situation may be a factor making for the reorganization of local units of work.

#### THE CATHOLIC RURAL LIFE PROGRAM

In 1921 the National Catholic Welfare Conference established its Rural Life Bureau. "The primary object of the Bureau is to be of service to rural parishes and other organizations which deal with the rural problem. Since the development of the rural parish is conditioned by whatever affects rural life, the Bureau is concerned with the entire range of rural problems and undertakes to show how the parish and similar organizations may take part in the solution of these problems." The program outlined is comprehensive in terms of rural life and contains the following: "The promotion of wide diffusion of land ownership and of easy access to land by *bona-fide* operators; encouragement of the coöperative movement, with safeguards against its becoming merely capitalistic, which is the case when it leads farmers to produce only for the market and not primarily for the family—the aim is the self-

sufficient community, eliminating the economic waste of unnecessary transportation; the promotion of business administration among farmers."

Most Reverend Edwin V. O'Hara, the first director of the Rural Life Bureau, now Bishop of Great Falls, Montana, has written: "The rural life problem can be stated in terms of education. It may be defined as the problem of building up a cultured rural society. . . . Denmark has showed the way in the development of rural civilization. The folk-schools for adults in that country operate during seasons when the farmers can take advantage of the courses offered. These schools do not specialize in agriculture. They are for the farmer, but have for their object the development of his capacity to grasp general ideas. That, we repeat, is the cultural need of rural society, without which it will forever be impossible to keep intelligent and capable boys and girls on the farm."

A significant rural development, made possible largely by adult education methods, has been the organization of credit unions in over forty rural parishes. Bishop O'Hara studied rural credit unions in Europe and in 1926 plans were made to educate the rural clergy about them. In 1929 there was organized a Parish Credit Union National Committee, with headquarters at the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Washington, D. C. Several experiments were begun for their demonstration value. One of these was in St. Cecilia's Parish, Ames, Iowa. Organized in 1927, it did not begin to function fully until the fall of 1928. It was the first parish credit union organized west of the New England states. There was no experience or leadership nearby. Again, it was recognized that although parish credit unions might be a success in Europe and in Quebec, that did not mean they would be a success in the Middle West. Furthermore, some of the clergy were dubious and freely predicted disaster. By the fall of 1928 there were 22 members who had deposited savings of \$1,300.

Recently there have been forty-four members who deposited a total of \$4,000. Loans are made only to members. The interest savings to members have been great. Here is an example of "brotherhood credit" practiced by small groups of neighbors, all members of a parish. The priests who have organized credit unions testify that mutual aid in economic matters is much more frequent after organization than was the case before the union existed.

#### THE NEW HAMPSHIRE PLAN

"An adventure in ministerial and church efficiency" was adopted in 1925 by the Committee on the Ministry of the New Hampshire Congregational Conference. Among its purposes were: "To promote an *esprit de corps* among the rural ministers of the state, giving them a sense of the importance of the rural ministry as a profession; to give the ministers and churches a larger conception of what is meant by parish and community, inspiring them to a service over areas rather than to churches; to assist ministers not specially trained for rural work to find a new effectiveness and greater efficiency in their work; to afford an opportunity for coöperative reading, study and field work."

Each minister participating makes a parish map, studies his community and recommends to his church a program based upon his study. A country life bookshelf, containing twenty-eight important works on rural life, is recommended. A special assignment must be undertaken by the minister, consisting of an exhaustive study of selected books, and a review of the book in terms of its use and applicability in his own parish. On completion of the assignment a certificate is issued.

#### SEMINARS FOR MINISTERS

For several years the Board of Education of the Methodist Episcopal Church has conducted seminars for ministers

in various sections of the country. They are in session for ten days and include from thirty to fifty ministers each. Those who attend are carefully selected, and include men from both urban and rural parishes. They must devote the entire ten days to the business of the seminar. The sessions are informal. The first day or two the members list "social situations of concern," and endeavor to discover and understand trends in their communities which affect their work. About the third to the fifth day, the main problems become clear and are defined. By a democratic process the members select the problems on which they wish to work during the seminar and informal groupings or committees are thus arranged. The committees study available data and do some research and reading. They then present a report to the entire seminar, where it is criticized and discussed. The effort is to discover some fruitful "next steps" or methods of procedure. The Board of Education pays the salary and travel expenses of the leader of seminars. The ministers attending them pay their own travel and living expenses, and for mimeographing the proceedings.

The mimeographed reports of three of these seminars have been examined. The Troy Conference Seminar held at Amsterdam, N. Y., in the fall of 1931, gave considerable attention to adult education. A report was made on Dr. E. L. Thorndike's studies of adult learning. It was the experience of those participating that a considerable proportion of the adults in their churches were not engaged in any significant learning processes—in the words of one they were cases of "arrested development." But the economic situation which is forcing drastic adjustments upon so many is bringing about an awakening. "Adult learning arises from a sense of need." There has come about in some congregations serious consideration "as to the necessity of a radical change in the economic order, a serious consideration of the profit motive in industry, old

age pensions, an adequate program of education. . . . But the question arises as to whether the individual will look to the church for help along this line." Furthermore, "there is evidence on every hand of an increasing desire on the part of the adult group for more light on the religious problem as it relates itself to practical life. 'In the days now passing over us, even fools ask for the meaning of them.' "

The seminar members considered the implications of a democratic educational process in the life of the local churches. They agreed that "in the past the church's motivation in the organized adult class has been largely an appeal to numbers, competition with other churches and loyalty to the institution of the church. The motivation today should be a new area of interest along the lines of adult needs. . . . We believe that the seminar method offers large opportunities. Its process is creative and many of the major problems of adult life today can best be treated in a seminar." It was recommended that adult groups within the churches hold a seminar for a study of organized charity, its history, development and performance in the present economic crisis. Other topics recommended were vocational guidance for adults, and the objectives of religious education.

#### A LIFE STUDY INSTITUTE

Another significant venture is the organization in the state of West Virginia of the Life Study Institute, formed through the coöperation of the state council of religious education and a group of denominational colleges. The coordinating factor has been the agricultural extension division of West Virginia University, and the executive leadership has been given by A. H. Rapping of the extension staff. The state organization assists in the organization of "life study groups" which have pursued study and discussion of subjects which are frankly in the realm of philosophies of life. The printed announcement gives the following quota-

tion from Karl de Schweinitz as the emphasis for the groups: "Greatest of all the arts, life is also the most exacting in its demands upon its practitioners, but it is not beyond mastery. . . . Men have achieved it, are achieving it constantly." More specifically, the study groups have been concerned with studies of the historical and cultural background of the American people, of the relationships of the American people to the world community, of leisure time activities and problems, of the ways whereby churches and schools can make their best possible contribution in directing the changing social order. The Life Study Institute is the medium through which the local groups can secure leadership, study materials, other assistance.

Life study groups have been organized in small numbers in all parts of the state. They consist of from five to twenty-five persons who pursue study over a period of twenty-four weeks. The units are arranged in three sections of eight meetings each so that a student may attend one, two or all the sections. Records are kept of the group discussions. The faculties of the colleges of the state have supplied most of the leadership. On completion of a unit of study a certificate is awarded. Over 150 persons have received certificates. On completion of twelve studies, it is planned to grant a diploma in fairly formal fashion at a commencement. The project illustrates coöperative endeavor on the part of educational institutions.

#### SPECIAL SCHOOLS FOR RURAL MINISTERS

An interesting endeavor in continuing education for the rural minister has been the maintenance of a group of special summer schools for ministers in town and country over a period of twelve years. They are all interdenominational, and a number have been held at state agricultural colleges. They are in session for a minimum of two weeks, are held in spring and summer, and follow a suggested curriculum recommended on the basis of ex-

perience by the Joint Committee on Town and Country of the Home Missions Council and the Federal Council of Churches. Those held in 1932 were as follows:

Rural Church School, Vanderbilt University  
School for Town and Country Ministers, Bangor Theological Seminary  
Rural Leadership School, University of Wisconsin  
Summer School of Theology, Auburn Seminary  
School for Town and Country Ministers, Michigan State College  
Rural Leadership School, Purdue University  
School for Rural Ministers, Virginia Polytechnic Institute  
School for Town and Country Ministers, Cornell University  
Rural Pastors' School, Drew University  
Summer School for Rural Pastors, South Dakota State College  
Pastors Fellowship School, Estes Park, Colorado

The main purposes of the special schools, as given in the 1932 announcement were: "To assist ministers in acquiring new insight into tested methods of town and country church work and understanding of the trends and problems of modern country life; to develop a fellowship among those engaged in rural service; to develop contacts between agricultural leaders, particularly those in extension work, and rural ministers."

Among the titles of courses during recent years at one or more of the schools have been the following:

The Country Church and Our Generation  
Rural Values: An Appreciation of Rural Life  
Town-Country Church Readjustments  
Leadership Training in Religious Education  
Agricultural Economics  
Community Recreation  
Rural Sociology  
Principles of Social Case Work  
Problems of the Public Speaker  
The Minister's Message  
The Sunday School in the Rural Church  
Adult Education in Rural Life

Agriculture of the Old Testament  
Inter-church Coöperation  
Week-day Religious Education  
Dramatics and Pageantry  
Country Church Efficiency  
Problems of Rural Youth  
Women's Contribution to Leadership  
Introduction to Mental Hygiene  
The Larger Parish Plan  
Social Problems of the Modern Family  
Religious Education and the Church School

Instructors who have had a variety of experience and training are on the faculties of the schools; for example, representatives of the state agricultural extension service, experienced ministers, professors of rural sociology and agricultural economics, directors of rural church departments of various religious bodies, executives of state and county social agencies, specialists in religious education, officers of interdenominational organizations. Living expenses are kept down to an irreducible minimum. Frequently camping grounds are provided for those attending. Small grants, sometimes called scholarships, covering part or all of the travel and living expenses, given by the official church bodies, are necessary in order to secure attendance at the schools. The salaries of rural ministers are generally too low to permit many of them to pay their own way. During 1931, over 1,000 persons attended the schools. These were mainly pastors and their wives, although a few schools encourage teachers to attend. Progress has also been made during recent years in organizing a group of special schools for Negro rural pastors, held for short periods in the South.

#### THE CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATIONS

Both the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. have extensive rural activities. These movements had their origins in the cities of England and the United States. Rural work

began after the establishment of work in the cities, and while perhaps not an afterthought, was in the early stages at least an adaptation of urban techniques and experience to a rural situation.

The rural work of the Y.M.C.A. was begun in 1873 in Page County, Illinois. Its main contribution has been the emphasis on voluntary leadership and the maintenance of a program without special buildings or extensive equipment. At present 121 counties or districts are organized in all regions of the United States. There are groups of one sort or another in 4,500 villages. There is a tendency to combine city and rural work, and in more than a score of areas, city and rural associations are coöperating in maintaining programs. The county or district secretary is a discoverer and trainer of volunteer leaders of both men's and boys' groups. He conducts work in both religious education and physical education. He gives considerable attention to leisure time activities. County secretaries usually come to the work after experience in some other profession, such as the ministry, education, extension work, business. The present tendency is to place younger men, including graduates of colleges and the Y.M.C.A. colleges, in positions as assistant secretaries, thus giving them a period as "internes." There are distinct evidences that the rural work is becoming more and more educational in emphasis. At the present writing the economic situation is overwhelming, however, and practically all associations are doing an increasing amount of relief work.

About fifty full-time secretaries are engaged in Y.W.C.A. work in 2,500 rural communities. Rural work has been the concern of only a very small group within the Association. Recently, however, there have been evidences of a growing concern about rural affairs and rural women and girls, and in the development of more lay and professional leaders. The Y.W.C.A. is noted among modern organizations for the prominent place it has given the volunteer.

Employed secretaries generally are well instructed in the art of training and developing volunteers. Within the past year definite steps have been taken to make the program material sent out to local areas truly rural-urban, not urban with occasional rural content. Rural adult groups are concentrating on problems of leisure, community affairs, provisions for educational facilities, philosophies of life, etc.

Of special interest is the summer school for rural secretaries, organized in 1926 and held at Camp Maqua, Maine, and later at Fletcher Farm, Proctorsville, Vermont. It has been attended by small groups of both experienced and inexperienced secretaries, usually numbering 12 to 20. The objective of the school, in addition to its professional or technical purpose, has been to release the powers of the students, to give rural workers a sense of the importance of their place in the scheme of things, to develop comradeship and community of ideas. The quality of the school experience is regarded of as much importance as the subject matter. In the sessions of the school, consideration has been given to the situations faced by professional workers, and subject matter has been related to those situations. The subject matter dealt with has generally been in the realm of the history of the American movement, the social sciences, psychology, educational methods, program making of local groups. The chief need at present seems to be a systematic body of case material which can be used in training leadership, both lay and professional. The school was recently discontinued because economic conditions have made it undesirable to train new secretaries for rural positions.

#### COÖPERATION WITH AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

The ways whereby local churches and the agricultural extension service (see Chapter V) are coöperating have been listed in a Department of Agriculture Bulletin avail-

able on application. Excerpts from the reports of the county extension workers indicate that numbers of priests and ministers have been active co-workers of the agents. Churches have frequently given the use of their buildings for meetings of extension groups working on specific projects—many a church basement has been the scene of a project in the making of women's hats, for example. The coöperation of the churches with the extension service of West Virginia in the holding of country life conferences in the church buildings has been extensive over a period of years. One county agent reported after several years of work: "The country life conference movement has brought about a long-desired opportunity to the country and small town churches to render real service to the entire community. The union services of the churches of different denominations all working together in conference to make their community better cause the people to forget their little differences. I believe the results are more lasting than any other organization work we have done."

One minister testified that a home demonstration agent by organizing a home and community beautification project, in which he coöperated, had accomplished more in one year in that community than he had in three years. A ten year program of planting was developed and has been followed systematically. Ministers and extension workers have worked together for library service. They have co-operated in carrying on landscaping projects for church grounds. Through the efforts of one county agent, a group of farmers raised a sum of money in order to send their minister to a university summer school.

#### THE REPORT OF A COMMUNITY CHURCH

The Pleasant Hill Community Church in Tennessee recently made a report of its "extension work" during 1931. Six local chautauquas were held. At these there were demonstrations of home nursing and care of the sick; discus-

sions of "eating for health," better farming methods and of the values of an education; musical programs. They were all week-end meetings. One member of the church staff worked closely with the county home demonstration agent. Many boxes of garden seed obtained through the American Red Cross were distributed as a part of drought relief. Groups of women were taught food conservation, and the growing of larger quantities of garden produce was encouraged. For a time the community house of the church was a warehouse and the center of mobilizing the community to help people help themselves so far as the food supply was concerned. The community house was also the scene of the annual community fair. "Years of effort and a most generous coöperation have made this extension work possible."

## CHAPTER IX

### FARM ORGANIZATIONS

*Have we yet conceived of the unique contributions to the destiny of mankind that can be made by an alert farm population?*—KENYON L. BUTTERFIELD.

#### THE GRANGE

"THE American farmer will not listen; he will not save himself." This was the conclusion of Oliver Kelley, recognized as the founder of the Grange, in the early days of the history of the farmers' fraternity which is the oldest of the large farm organizations in the United States. Oliver Kelley's verdict—one that has been heard many times since—was given to his wife on his return from an attempt at farm organization. Thereupon his wife, Temperance Lane Kelley, who had just received a small legacy from an uncle, gave it to her husband and added: "A diligent man shall stand before kings." Although it seemed that the "spark of organization" had gone out, the encouragement the pioneers received was sufficient to enable them to carry on.

Oliver Kelley was sent to the South by President Johnson in the reconstruction era. While there, wrestling with the difficulties of farmers, he thought of the idea of a farmers' fraternity, in which self help would be emphasized, and which would aid in building morale among both men and women. The first local grange was organized in Washington, D. C., Potomac Grange No. 1, a trial and school organization. The first typical grange to continue was at Fredonia, N. Y., still functioning. The first state grange was in Minnesota. The first name used was the Patrons of Husbandry. Today both names are used or combined,

and it is sometimes called The Grange of the Patrons of Husbandry. (Grange is old English for farmstead.) Women are admitted as full members of the order. At the 1931 annual meeting of the National Grange, 586,000 paid members in 8,000 locals were reported. The Grange flourishes in about three-fourths of the states. The locals own 3,000 grange halls where their meetings and other activities are held.

Varied and well-balanced local programs probably account as much as any other factor for the stability of the Grange. The interests have been social and educational as well as economic. The achievements of state and national granges in legislation have been great. In practical community service, probably no rural institution has a better record. Two of the seven founders of the Grange were clergymen, one an Episcopalian, the other a Universalist. One of them was national secretary for twenty years. The other wrote much of the Grange manual and a good deal of other early literature. In 1883, Daniel Aken of South Carolina made an address, still circulated in leaflet form, in which the main attention is given to the "educational purposes" of the order. In 1931, in the midst of unemployment relief and of the most serious agricultural depression of a generation, the Master of the National Grange issued an appeal to all locals to "take the lead in getting surplus food to the places of need."

#### THE LECTURE HOUR

"The pearl of great price" at the weekly grange meetings is the lecture hour, says Jennie Buell, lecturer of the Michigan State Grange, who has had a large experience in preparing program suggestions and other material for the local organizations. It is the chief educational activity of the grange and Miss Buell thinks that "no other farm organization has undertaken to make so much of its educational department by means of regular and insistent ex-

ercise of home talent. For the lecturers are all farm men and women. It is both written and unwritten law in the order to maintain an educational program. On many occasions the lecture hour becomes an open forum. "No problem in the experience of members is debarred if they desire light and help upon it." The lecture hour has taught self-expression among rural adults at least as well as any other rural educational agency. "There are thousands of men and women who joined the grange in early youth, and who now, though grown aged and feeble, still attend the meetings in the spirit of students . . . , open-minded and eager to participate in its intellectual activities. Such members justify the claim that the grange is clearly entitled to rank among educational institutions. It is, in fact, a school out of school, which has no limited courses, no graduation days. One of these men, who for more than fifty years went to school in the grange was fond of quoting: 'Man is a perpetual becoming,' and to illustrate the statement by citing what the grange lecture hour had done for many a raw, diffident, and tongue-tied farm man."

The lecture hour was placed by the founders into the ritual. It is called for at every meeting just as the opening and closing exercises or the rendering of bills and accounts. The hour is in charge of the "worthy lecturer" who conducts a program of discussion, as well as literary and entertainment numbers. The topics of discussions vary greatly. Most state granges send out standardized suggestions, and the *National Grange Monthly* carries a page of program material in every issue. Grange leaders say that their locals "dwindle and die" if the lecture hour is not interesting. No other activity provides such a bond between the members. Music and dramatics are emphasized. Frequently exhibits are used.

Regional conferences that are really short training courses for lecturers are held in all parts of the country every year. A number of the states issue handbooks which

are revised year by year and the National Grange also issues annually a handbook for state lecturers. The 1932 national handbook calls attention to ways of organizing study clubs and says that reading courses have recently been popular in several states. The national lecturer emphasizes in a message to local lecturers that they have charge of the "educational department" of the grange and adds: "I am especially anxious to see the educational department of our order grow and extend its usefulness and practical service to our membership."

#### TYPICAL PROGRAMS

The New York State Grange maintains a Reading Club which follows a list of books prepared by Miss Elizabeth Arthur, the state lecturer. Special titles, called the grange books of the month, are chosen for reading and discussion. Members of the Reading Club enter it for a variety of reasons: "to gain information, to enjoy leisure, to renew acquaintance with standard authors, to investigate new fields, to gain new ideas." A recently published list contains works on nature, health, housing, poetry, biography, fiction, and reading for children by age groups. The Michigan State Grange recently conducted a reading contest, giving awards for reviews of books. The granges have been especially influential in molding public opinion in favor of county library systems. Roadside beautification has been emphasized by local granges and roadside advertising has been consistently opposed by the organization.

In April, 1932, the program for a meeting on housing was published in the *National Grange Monthly*. A discussion on "pioneer vs. modern rural homes" was proposed. Reviews of an article on farm taxation which had appeared in the *Monthly* were suggested. In June, 1932, reports on public events were called for. A recent program recommended to Michigan granges was on redecorating homes.

Other topics suggested recently in the *National Grange Monthly* were "Best things heard over the radio," "The relations of the grange and the county church," "Lessons of the depression," "Is the family farm obsolete?" "What is the greatest need of rural America?" At a Connecticut grange "international night" was observed. Foreign-born members were asked to give their recollections of farm life in other countries.

#### THE FARM BUREAU

"The Farm Bureau grew up around the country agent," says Dr. Carl C. Taylor, who has made a special study of farmers' organizations in the United States. The educational services of county agents have been discussed in Chapter V. It is appropriate here to consider the activities of the voluntary farmers' organizations which in the Northern and Western states have been more closely related to the extension service than any other organized farmers' groups.

In 1909 there was organized the Farm Bureau of the Chamber of Commerce of Binghamton, N. Y., following a study by the Chamber of ways and means of improving agriculture in the city's trade area. Two years later John H. Barron was employed as county agent, funds being provided by the United States Department of Agriculture; the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad; and the Binghamton Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Barron began to appoint laymen as chairmen of the community groups interested in his demonstration work. These chairmen met periodically and in 1913 organized the Farm Improvement Association of Broome County, N. Y. In 1914 the name was changed to the Broome County Farm Bureau. The county farm bureau idea spread rapidly. In West Virginia the idea of supporting extension work partly by membership fees developed and memberships in the county farm bureau were sold at \$1.00 each. As county

extension agents were appointed they organized county farm bureaus as agencies through which they could become familiar with local problems. By 1919, over 80 per cent of the county agents working in Northern and Western states had farm bureau organizations. In the South the same type of organization did not develop. There the agents coöperated with farmers' clubs or county councils of agriculture. With the war, and the expansion of extension work, state federations of the county farm bureaus were rapidly organized. A plan of organization for the American Farm Bureau Federation was drawn up by representatives of state organizations in 1918 and 1919. On March 1, 1920, the meeting that resulted in a permanent organization was held.

The Farm Bureau is an association of which farm families are members. The adult membership has been about a million persons. It has emphasized legislative work and encouraged coöperative marketing and purchasing. In a number of states it is organized on the basis of local township units; in others the locals are neighborhood or community units or social clubs. The locals elect their own officers, determine their program, and maintain committees. The membership is integrated nationally by division of membership fees, whereby a family by paying county dues automatically becomes a member of the state and national organizations. The state bureaus pay annually to the national organization fifty cents for each paid up member in their borders. The American Farm Bureau Federation has a home and community department, which is in effect, the women's division.

The following summary is made by Dr. Taylor: "The Farm Bureau began as an organization to facilitate demonstration in production. As soon as it became state-wide and nation-wide it went headlong into great economic and even political projects. . . . It now shows signs in all units of its organization . . . of giving due emphasis to

the social and community phases of farm life which were in its creed from the beginning."

It should be emphasized that it is the duty of the agricultural extension agent to serve all rural people impartially. This has been official national policy, reiterated many times. Even though he may have special coöperative relations with the farm bureau, the agent is a public servant, paid by tax money coming from Federal, state and national sources. But in actual practice, the policy is occasionally difficult to carry out. An agent may give more attention to the farm bureau members than to others. In a few states at least, the bitterest kind of conflicts have arisen locally between other farmers' organizations and the Farm Bureau, for one reason because of the close relationships of the Bureau with the extension service. In such situations impartial service has become impossible.

Training schools and leadership conferences are held for state and county officers of farm bureaus by regions. The program for one held in the fall of 1931 at Trenton, N. J., illustrates the topics considered at such meetings. Topics of some of the addresses and discussions were "How to Find and Develop Leaders," "Training Leaders within the Organization," "Recognition of Achievement," "Community Organization," "Fundamentals of Farm Organization."

#### STATE PROGRAM IN OHIO

In 1928 special attention was given by the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation to the organization of local programs in which men, women and children would be interested. The material sent out by the state office contained suggestions for debates, discussions, talks, readings and plays. The chief effort was placed, however, in enlisting interest in the attainment of certain standards of accomplishment. In 1929, 21 communities enrolled in an effort to meet the standards for locals; in 1930, 128; in 1931, 212.

In order to meet the standards, a local farm bureau unit

must have active committees on at least five educational or demonstration projects, among them those in home improvement, electrification, school coöperation, health and safety, recreation, coöperative credit. These may or may not be carried out in coöperation with the agricultural extension service. A local must further hold at least six meetings a year at which reports are made on projects and certain other requirements must be met, including one that there must be opportunity for participation of the members in the meeting. "This means some definite provision for discussion of matters in which members are interested." Complete records must be kept and reports made of meetings and activities. Standards for a county have also been worked out.

In a number of the counties of the state leadership schools have been held by the state staff "for the purpose of developing latent talent and ability." These are usually one-day schools which consider parliamentary law, the requirements of a good meeting, sources of material. Miss Verna Elsinger, who has had a major part in the program, writes: "Probably our most effective and satisfactory results in leadership training have been obtained through the use of pageants. In some counties as many as 900 persons have taken part. The important and obvious results have been an increased appreciation of beauty, a greater capacity for local activity and a quickened sense of the possibilities in organization effort."

#### TOWNSHIP GROUPS IN IOWA

In close coöperation with the Iowa Agricultural Extension Service, an intensive program of township organization has been worked out in the state. Over a thousand township farm bureaus have been functioning actively. This development is due to a considerable extent to local efforts to meet a set of standards. The requirements in Iowa are somewhat of the same nature as those just out-

lined for Ohio, although details vary. In 1931, seventy township groups met the requirements.

A device which has greatly improved programs in township organizations has been the Yearbook. In 1926 there were 54 township organizations that had issued yearbooks. In 1931, the number had increased to 456. W. H. Stacy of the Iowa State College says:

A complete Yearbook has the following features:

It specifies the date and place of each township community meeting.

It indicates the nature of each meeting, or suggests some of the main features.

It names those on the program committee who will be in charge of the detailed arrangements.

It lists the principal farm bureau projects in the township and the names of the project leaders.

It presents the names of the officers of the national, state, county and township farm bureaus.

It is printed or mimeographed and distributed to every member of the local organization.

In Iowa a varied program has been carried on. Country clergymen are all invited to become associate members. Township orchestras and choruses have been encouraged.

#### THE HOME BUREAU

In somewhat the same way as the Farm Bureau grew up around the county agent, the Home Bureau grew up around the home demonstration agent. But it is not nearly so extensively organized, and in many states it is not found at all. In the creation of voluntary organizations, extension workers soon encountered problems constantly met by many educators and social and religious workers. Should there be separate organizations for women? Do women need organizations of their own in order to develop responsibility and skill in participation in public affairs? Is the ultimate goal that of fair coöperation between the

sexes? How can this best be brought about—by an organization admitting both men and women or by organizations having both as members? At the present stage of women's participation in public affairs, both women and men hold widely varying views in regard to what past experience has taught and in regard to what is the part of wisdom for the future.

Among the states having Home Bureaus separately organized are New York and Illinois. Reports of recent activities in New York are here cited as illustrations of what the Bureaus are doing. The state organization participates in a Women's Joint Legislative Forum, which meets once a week at Albany when the legislature is in session. Studies are made of pending legislation and reports made to the county chairmen of the Farm Bureaus. The state organization has established a scholarship fund and plans to increase it. Considerable interest has been shown in dissemination of the findings of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection and of the President's Conference on Home Building and Home Ownership. The state organization is sponsoring contests "on proposed and completed kitchen improvements" which are open to any home-maker in the state. A systematic study is being made of "success in marketing farm home products." The Chemung County Home Bureau has launched a long time program in child health, the first year's project being on the feeding problems of babies. In Oswego and Delaware counties five year programs of dairy improvement have been completed by the Home Bureaus. In Steuben County a special program of circular letters which are sent to non-members of the Home Bureaus has been maintained for four years. One important aspect has been a service to leaders of recreational activities among various organizations in the county. This service has been sent to as many as 150 leaders in the county, and seems to have met the needs of persons with many interests.

## THE FARMERS' EDUCATIONAL AND COOPERATIVE UNION

"It is perhaps the greatest school in the world," says the 1931 book of minutes of the National Convention of the Farmers' Educational and Coöperative Union of America. In 1902, a little group of farmers met at the Smyrna School House of Raines County, Texas, and organized "Local No. 1," of the Farmers' Union. The official banner contains two symbols—a sturdy live oak, and two doves. The minute book mentioned above describes the significance of the symbols: "The live oak, such as grows in Texas. Leaves that have turned yellow drop off, but fresh new green ones appear every day of the year. The leaves are the Farmers' Union members. The tree is sturdy, stocky, strong, its roots deep in American soil, its crown broad and its carriage proud, an inspiration and a comfort. The harder the storm, the more active its leaves get; it bends but never breaks. . . . Two doves, emblems of peace, each with an olive branch, one blue, one gray; one representing the farmers of the North, the other those of the South, and under it all: 'Let us reason together.' No problem is too difficult to be solved by men and women who can and do reason together." The present president reports 5,000 locals in 26 states. State organizations are required to have 5,000 members before receiving a charter. At the 1931 national convention, about 100,000 members were represented.

The centers of strength of the Farmers' Union are in the Middle West and South West. The Union is both an educational and an economic organization. Numerous locals and many state organizations maintain coöperatives for buying, selling, and credit. Its president calls the Union "an educational and fraternal class organization for farmers." The national secretary writes that "the primary function of the national union, as well as the state divisions is educational work, particularly teaching the principles of

coöperation." In little schoolhouses, the locals of the Union meet to discuss their experiences in economic co-operation, their legislative program, etc. The 1931 book of proceedings says of these local meetings that they are schools where "coöperation is taught, not only in theory, but by actual practice."

## CHAPTER X

### THE CULTURAL ARTS

*Art has not come to its maturity if it do not put itself  
abreast with the most potent influences of the world.*

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON.

ROBERT FROST has said that "poetry is more often of the country than of the city." A. R. Mann, of Cornell University, recently told a student audience at the Iowa State College that "the open country is the poet's and the artist's great resource." But well informed observers are divided in their estimates of the way rural people have expressed themselves through the cultural arts. Alfred G. Arvold, who began "the little country theater," even puts it thus: "The city has always meant expression—the country, repression."

Our purpose in this chapter is to interpret the stirrings among rural people which may some day become rural art movements with widespread participation. Probably the chief developments are in amateur dramatics and in music. Landscaping is making progress, too, and organized recreation is far from a novelty in many sections. The origins of a majority of these developments can be traced to the agricultural colleges and the state universities. Also important are the farm journals, the farm organizations and the public schools.

#### THE DRAMA

Significant participation of rural people in the drama took place first in North Dakota. Student actors were sent into rural areas, the package library of plays was de-

veloped, lay people were taught to make plays and pageants. Curiously enough, the beginnings were the work of two men working separately, who started at about the same time. In 1906 Frederick H. Koch of the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks went with a group of student players to the small towns of the state. The students distributed handbills in costume. They played Sheridan's *The Rivals* and other old favorites. The interest that followed resulted in numerous local pageants and in folk plays, intimate portrayals of life on the prairie. When Frederick H. Koch began touring out of the state university at Grand Forks, Alfred G. Arvold came to the agricultural college at Fargo. He began an "intellectual free delivery" in the form of collections of plays. In 1914 he started the little country theater at the college, where he has trained large numbers of students who have adapted his technique in numerous communities of the state.

Professors Arvold and Koch differ in experience and methods of work, as Kenneth Macgowan points out in *Footlights Across America*. Professor Koch has attempted to develop the artistry of the theater; Professor Arvold has worked to get drama into the programs of the granges, community halls, county and state fairs. Expressed somewhat differently, Professor Arvold has striven first to get people to express themselves through the drama, secondarily to achieve great skill in production.

Professor Arvold is in the department of public discussion and social service of the North Dakota Agricultural College. Here are maintained files upon files of pageant materials, boxes upon boxes of plays, with usually a number of copies of each play. The little country theater at Fargo seats about 350 people. In the course of the year as many as 45 plays may be given, most of which are short productions. Admissions range from 10¢ to 50¢, although when Ibsen's *Brand* was put on \$1.00 was charged. The students go on producing in all parts of the state, in all

sorts of buildings, or out in the open in the summer. At the state fair each year a full program is put on.

An official statement of purpose of the little country theater is as follows:

The aim is to produce such plays and exercises as can be easily staged in a country schoolhouse, the basement of a country church, the sitting room of a farm home, the village or town hall, or any place where people assemble for social betterment. Its principal function is to stimulate an interest in good, clean drama and original entertainment among the people living in the open country and villages, in order to help them find themselves, that they may become satisfied with the community in which they live. In other words, its real purpose is to use the drama and all that goes with the drama as a force in getting people together and acquainted with each other, in order that they may find out the hidden life forces of nature itself. Instead of making the drama a luxury for the classes, its aim is to make it an instrument for the enlightenment and enjoyment of the masses.

In 1918 Professor Koch went to the Chair of Dramatic Literature at the University of North Carolina. Soon thereafter he organized the Carolina Playmakers, who have had a national influence on the rural drama. Soon thereafter, too, there was established the Bureau of Community Drama in the Extension Division of the University, in order to meet the requests from all parts of the state for advice as to choice of plays, for information regarding directors who could produce amateur dramatics, and for all sorts of help in regard to the drama.

The students of Professor Koch have written and produced numerous folk plays—literally out of the folklore, legends, traditions and lives of the people of the state of North Carolina. Four volumes of them have been published. "We know that if we speak for the human nature in our own neighborhood we shall be expressing for all," says Professor Koch. "The locality if it be truly interpreted is the only universal. It has been so in all lasting literature,

and in every locality all over America, as in North Carolina, there is the need and the striving for a fresh expression of our common folk life."

The University Playmakers have developed the appetites of so many teachers and citizens that the Bureau of Community Drama of the Extension Division has developed varied services for them. People have been trained in play production through short courses. The bibliographic service has been tremendous; for example, an 88-page pamphlet giving a list of plays for schools and little theaters, compiled by Frederick H. Koch and Nettina Strobach, published in 1930. Sometimes members of the staff of the Bureau have actually produced plays and pageants. Plays at county fairs have been a special feature. There the tastes of many persons may be influenced. About a hundred high schools have dramatic clubs which have been federated into the Carolina Dramatic Association. An annual state tournament for these clubs has been held. There are also over 60 independent local producing groups throughout the state.

"All the state's a stage, and all we folks are merely players," said a farm woman after farm residents in large numbers had taken part in a state dramatic tournament at the Wisconsin Agricultural College, Madison. The state movement for the development of rural dramatics had its origin in 1925 when Edward Schelling, county agricultural agent in Vernon County, put on home talent plays in a systematic fashion at local farmers' institutes. By 1932 there were over 20 local producing groups in Vernon County with over 200 players. Dane County followed Vernon, until in 1928 the first state tournament at the college was held. Entries were limited that year to six counties. The event took place in connection with the annual farm and home week at the college.

Perhaps of most significance is that about a score of farm people have written their own plays. One group in

Dane County could not find a suitable play, but one of their own number soon wrote one. Now, the "original Wisconsin" plays have become the most popular. Dramatics is thriving throughout the depression—when was it more necessary for farm people to provide their own entertainment? In 1932, 25 counties held adult drama tournaments in which local groups participated. Nineteen counties took part in the state tournament. A total of 40 out of Wisconsin's 71 counties have held one or more county tournaments within the past five years. During 1932 at least three thousand people took part as amateur coaches, stage managers and as actors. Several little theaters have been started. Institutes for leaders have been given by the Bureau of Dramatic Activities of the Extension Division of the University. The whole program has had its main direction from the extension service of the agricultural college. Arthur F. Wileden, who with J. H. Kolb and D. E. Lindstrom had a major part in directing the program, says that it has four main purposes: "The first is to provide a wholesome and worth while recreation and leisure-time activity free from commercialism. The second is to provide opportunity for individual self-expression and originality. A third is to develop appreciation of the arts. The fourth is to learn to work together in group enterprises."

Other state institutions have developed significant services to rural groups interested in dramatics. For example, Illinois has started a program much like that of Wisconsin. Cornell's activities date from 1907. Indiana has an extensive drama loan service. Virginia has an announcement entitled "Pick your play from plenty."

We may generalize by saying that most of this work is comparatively new. Trained leaders are probably not available in the same numbers as in the cities, but it has been demonstrated that able ones can be developed rapidly and that a majority of communities can do a great deal to

help themselves. Many of the performances are stated to be poor by some authorities, but the most important thing is that there is evidence of striving toward excellence. The real results have not yet been appraised. Here may be a major aspect of rural adult education.

#### MUSIC

As everyone knows, rural people have always had an interest in music. We are here concerned with educational efforts in the direction of an improvement of music, and the development of music appreciation.

Walter Damrosch once reported that he received more letters of comment in regard to radio musical programs from Iowa in proportion to population than from any other state. This interest seems to be an index of the results of several state-wide programs which have been going on. Up until about ten years ago, musical instruction in Iowa schools was mainly confined to the cities which could employ special teachers. Then C. A. Fullerton of the Iowa State Teachers College experimented with a plan to assist classroom teachers to teach singing by means of assistance from the playing of phonograph records. The results were remarkable. At an Iowa state fair a choir of 3,000 voices sang a program without any rehearsal or training except that received in ordinary rural schools with phonograph records. Ten years ago Iowa enacted a law permitting towns or cities of less than 40,000 population to vote a tax in support of a band. The concerts given by these bands have been attended by large numbers of rural people. High school bands and orchestras have been widely organized and a state contest among them is sponsored by the State University of Iowa, Iowa City. In 1927, the Iowa State College, Ames, held its first rural orchestra contest in which community orchestras with farm residents as members participated. The agricultural extension service of the Iowa State College has a thorough program of

musical development. One project is entitled "community development" and has as its purposes the following: "To develop a capacity for greater enjoyment of music in the community through singing, games, association with masterpieces, development of music organizations; to assist in developing more worth while community programs through home talent plays, tournaments, exchange programs; to stimulate social activities of merit for home and community gatherings which will interest persons of all ages." The program is developed largely through the holding of training schools for lay leaders which are in session for one day only. The schools are conducted by Miss Fannie Buchanan, the extension specialist in charge. The county leaders pay a part of the travel expenses of the specialist and her living expenses while in the country.

A state rural music festival held at the Wisconsin College of Agriculture in 1931 is here described because the methods of organization used are typical of activities in other states. Five choral groups, each of which had been chosen by its county, participated. Each chorus rendered a half-hour program in which Handel's "Largo" was required. The judges scored these programs against a standard—the groups were not judged against each other. Each chorus received a final ranking of "superior," "excellent," "good" or "fair." Two choruses, one adult, one junior, were given the rank of "superior." The adult chorus was that from Oostburg of Sheboygan County. It consisted of the combined choirs of the three churches of the community, supplemented by non-members for the special event. Two hundred and nine rural residents were members of the five groups which participated in the final event.

#### ART EXTENSION AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

The agricultural extension service of the Illinois Agricultural College organized in 1919 an Art Extension Committee, whose purpose is "to assist in making art a more

potent elevating force in the lives of the people of the state of Illinois. It aims to help the people to discover beauty in nature and to enjoy it, to recognize beauty in art and to appreciate it, and to stimulate the production of beautiful things." The state committee consists largely of the leaders of local communities who have the same purpose in their own communities. Local groups act informally, for the most part striving for greater appreciation of art and nature within the local organizations. An important project of the state committee has been the assembling and circulation of exhibits consisting of paintings, photographs, landscape designs, prints of sculpture, etc. Meetings are held in various parts of the state. One of the most useful projects has been an annual tour of a section of Illinois. "Trips have been so arranged that the most beautiful parts of the state may in time become more familiar to the people of the state." R. E. Hieronymus, community adviser of the University of Illinois, has directed the work of the Art Extension Committee.

The Central West Virginia Recreation and Art League, organized in 1928, is a movement of a somewhat similar character. The members are the leaders of communities located within two hours' driving distance of Jackson's Mill, which is a state camp for adults and young people's groups. Meetings are held twice a year, once to plan spring and summer activities in the communities, the next time to arrange fall and winter programs. The League arose as a result of felt needs expressed by a lay leader, as follows: "We find it difficult to keep up a continued interest in a good, wholesome social and recreational program for our community. At times we get along all right but most of the time we seem to be floundering around for want of incentive or motives to spur us on, or for lack of a program that helps us to feel we are getting somewhere." The League was formed to answer the question: "What could be done to meet this need?" In addition to giving community lead-

ers program material at semiannual meetings, it aims to promote contacts and coöperation through inter-community events.

The American Federation of Arts, Washington, is at present endeavoring to inaugurate an experiment in art appreciation in rural communities, and is beginning by meeting a request from a Virginia group for exhibits. The Indiana Federation of Art Clubs, organized by assistance from the extension division of the state university, aims "to stimulate art appreciation in the state." It aims to utilize all the processes of coöperation possible between local groups. The American Country Life Association, New York, is engaged in a preliminary study of significant participation of rural people in the cultural arts, including the following: music, drama, folklore, dancing, literary pursuits, home and landscape beautification, handicraft, painting and sculpture, photography, exhibits, conservation of treasures, art in work. The survey is being made by W. H. Stacy of the Iowa State College.

#### THE OGLEBAY INSTITUTE

A rural-urban educational center has been established at Oglebay Park, Wheeling, West Virginia. The park is a gift to the city of Wheeling by Earl W. Oglebay, in the form of a bequest in 1926. It consists of 750 acres with numerous buildings. It is maintained by the city of Wheeling, while the Extension Division of West Virginia University and the Oglebay Institute, a voluntary organization of individuals, coöperate in arranging the program of educational and recreational activities. The educational program is largely in the cultural arts. Nature study is promoted in various ways. There are weekly classes and discussions for lay groups, and special institutes and conferences for teachers and students. Amateur dramatics is encouraged. The musical events at the Park are attended by residents of Wheeling and rural people in the

city's trade area. There is a museum on the grounds. In summer there are numerous camping groups, with musical and educational programs. Art exhibits have been numerous. Flower shows have been held. Special holiday programs are arranged.

#### A RURAL RECREATION PROGRAM

Beginning in 1927, the National Recreation Association has maintained special services to rural groups and their leaders. The Association, which is endeavoring to make all of its activities educational, has worked largely through other organizations and particularly through lay and professional extension workers. The Association, responding to a request from the extension service of the Department of Agriculture, sent a staff member to visit a number of open country communities to learn what kinds of services were wanted by the residents. "The farmers in general agreed that a broad program was needed with varied types of recreation to meet varying needs. When asked where leadership was to come from, all agreed it must come from the country itself and that the place to begin training was with the 4-H boys and girls and at the mothers' and leaders' camps. They responded heartily to the suggestion of institutes of three days or more when all groups would come together to receive training in varied activities."

It was decided to offer the services of three staff workers, one of whom was to give his entire time to dramatics, to local groups through the agricultural extension workers. In every community the training program is adapted to local needs and desires. In one year over 7,000 persons attended the meetings held. The conclusion of Weaver Pangburn, a staff member, in regard to the program is as follows: "There has long been a great interest in building up community spirit in rural America. Community councils have been organized without very concrete objectives and

with very few members of the committees knowing their functions. A great many community houses have been erected, either prior to the war or as a result of a desire to have a war memorial in that form. Some have become financial white elephants, and others have been inadequately used because people lacked training in how to get the best use out of them and how to operate them. It is the belief of the National Recreation Association that community spirit and community coöperation will come best with the knowledge of how to do things together which training in recreational methods implies. The training courses are building for community spirit and community action and not as a vague goal, but as a living objective to be reached by people who know what to do when they get together and who know how to utilize recreational means to fortify their common economic interests and spiritual needs."

#### LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

One of the tragic aspects of American life has been the lack of appreciation of the landscape, and the fact that relatively few organized efforts have been made to improve it. Yet it may safely be said that the importance of the landscape is being recognized by increasing numbers of rural residents. A considerable number of agricultural and other colleges are teaching landscape architecture. Women's clubs have done a great deal to stimulate home beautification and the popular magazines have done a great deal. The granges and farm bureaus have shown a consistent interest. The public schools have contributed conspicuously in some states. There is undoubtedly a great unorganized interest in the out-of-doors, and state and national parks are appreciated by rural as well as urban dwellers.

Probably the most systematic educational work among adults has been that of the various state agricultural ex-

tension services. The report of developments in Kansas during the years 1930 and 1931 may be cited as an illustration. The state specialist in landscape gardening reported assisting lay and professional leaders in 26 counties. The number of farm families who followed instructions in regard to landscaping was 848 in 1930 and 2,031 in 1931. In 1930, 127 club leaders enrolled in special study of the problems of beautification of home grounds, while in 1931 there were 332. The number of individuals receiving instruction through the club leaders was 1,254 in 1930 and 4,881 in 1931.

#### RURAL LIFE IN AMERICAN ART

In 1923 C. J. Galpin of the United States Department of Agriculture made an address on the above subject before the 14th annual convention of the American Federation of Arts. "The hoe age in agriculture . . . closed in America some decades ago," but the majority of American artists seem to be unaware of it. If American art is to be generally of greater significance in American rural life, then artists must become aware of the changes going on in agriculture. Further, they must come to recognize that hoes, or machines or soil are not the glory of agriculture. "But it is the living product. It is this living kernel of wheat, this living ear of corn, this boll of cotton, this orange, this apple, this Guernsey milch cow. The product is the farmer's pride. . . ." Artists must have more contact, too, with the great human products of agriculture, and must reside in rural communities to know what their residents mean by living well. "Such a preparation in study—no more tortuous and no more exacting than great artists in all ages have imposed upon themselves—will bring forth a new great type of art."

## CHAPTER XI

### RADIO PROGRAMS

*Mankind is now in one of its rare moods of shifting its outlook.*—ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD.

IN his biography of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Phillips Russell says: "At Lyons, Iowa, in 1866, Emerson was booked for a lecture at \$75.00, although the committee had wanted Wendell Phillips at \$110.00. At this place a ticket good for an oyster supper and Emerson's lecture as well sold for \$1.00, the committee doubtless hoping that those persons who could not be attracted by ideas would be enticed by oysters. At DeWitt, in the same state, indignation was caused when Emerson skipped a part of his lecture in order to catch a train to the next point, and the local newspaper even accused him of swindling. The fee for this lecture was twenty-five cents."

Today our Emersons, if there be any, do not lecture at Lyons or DeWitt, Iowa. Even the traveling chautauqua is no more in most parts of rural America, and in the other sections it seems to be rapidly disappearing. The commercial lyceums, according to the most reliable testimony we could secure, no longer are patronized in rural America, as they were in the pre-war days. Many factors account for these tendencies—good roads, automobiles, the accessibility of motion pictures, and particularly within the past five years, the popularity of the radio, which seems to be perhaps of even more significance in rural than in urban areas. For example, weather forecasts by radio are frequently an important part of the farm business. There is

enough evidence available to indicate that rural groups have special interests in some aspects of radio broadcasting.

The studies of Margaret Harrison, special investigator in radio education, Teachers College, Columbia University, indicate that improvements in the battery-operated receiving sets have greatly increased the significance of radio in rural life. "The establishment of national networks changed the interest of people, rural and urban alike, from 'tuning in' to programs. There was little point in trying to receive distant stations when the program was the same one that could be received on the local station, anyway." A general survey made of the radio programs offered by all the radio stations in the country in January, 1930, at Teachers College, revealed that 55 per cent of the offerings were musical; 7 per cent were designed for women, particularly those engaged in home-making; 5.5 per cent agricultural; 5.4 per cent were religious; 2 per cent were for children; and the remainder on a variety of other topics or for other special groups. The agricultural programs included weather and market reports. A majority of the agricultural broadcasts were from the local commercial stations and those operated by the agricultural colleges and state universities. Miss Harrison concludes that "rural people do not need or want programs designed for them," except what are known as the distinctly service programs in agriculture and home-making and the market reports. "There seems to be no justification for special general programs for a rural audience. Rural people are interested in the same music, the same talks, dramatizations, orchestras, etc., as urban people."

#### THE RADIO IN ADULT EDUCATION

The usefulness of radio in adult education is a highly controversial topic, and one can read or hear almost anything regarding its opportunities or disappointments. It

is being said on the one hand that education is unfairly treated by commercial broadcasters, and on the other that in general educational broadcasting is so dull that it has had all the attention paid to it that it deserves. There are those who feel that radio is a futile device in adult education and those who regard it as perhaps the most important instrument available. Some hold that there should be more broadcasting stations owned and operated by educational institutions and others believe that educators should make wider use of the facilities available through existing commercial stations and networks. There are those who favor special broadcasts for the rural population and those who think that all broadcasting should be rural-urban. It is not within our province to attempt to deal comprehensively with the present complicated situation in which educational broadcasting finds itself, because other references are available for those who wish to pursue the question further. We must confine ourselves to interpreting the wide experiences of the state agricultural colleges in using radio as a technique of extension education among adults, and of the United States Department of Agriculture, which has maintained extensive radio services.

#### AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

In 1931 the Committee on Rural Education of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education, consisting of John D. Willard, Chairman, Lyman Bryson, Margaret Harrison, and George Zehmer, made a preliminary inquiry in regard to the use of radio among the directors of agricultural extension at the agricultural colleges. These educators were felt to be the best informed in regard to the use of the radio in rural adult education. Replies were received from directors of forty-four states and Hawaii, although not all persons expressed an opinion on all the questions asked. Some of the questions, and digests of the replies received, were as follows:

1. Is there need for educational radio programs prepared especially for the rural radio audience? Why?

Out of the 44 replies received, 36 expressed the belief that specialized rural programs were necessary, three did not, and five were uncertain. Nearly all who answered in the affirmative believed that the special problems of rural America made some special rural radio programs necessary. With very few exceptions, the directors of extension felt that information on purely agricultural matters should comprise the bulk of the program prepared especially for the rural audience. Some thought that the peculiar needs of rural home-makers and of country life should also be dealt with. It was perhaps significant that almost no suggestions were made for using the radio as a systematic teaching device. Several directors stated that they thought the radio had inspirational value, but that "follow-up" material must be provided for those whose interest was awakened.

2. Who should be responsible for the preparation of radio educational programs especially adapted to the rural audience?

Replies indicated that the faculties of the agricultural colleges, and particularly their extension staffs, should be responsible for the preparation of technical program material. Coöperation with the United States Department of Agriculture was also stressed.

3. What programs already broadcast best illustrate the type of specialized rural program which you consider desirable?

The testimony was scattering and inconclusive. The Farm and Home Hour, arranged by the United States Department of Agriculture, received the most frequent mention, and the broadcasting station of Cornell University was mentioned five times as offering good programs of the type thought desirable.

4. Should rural programs be broadcast by commercial

stations or by stations operated by educational institutions?

Considerable division of judgment was revealed. Twelve persons thought that both commercial and college stations should be used, twelve believed that only the commercial stations should be used, and thirteen favored confining broadcasts to the stations of the colleges and universities. Those who favored the commercial station referred to the superior technical facilities and the possibilities of reaching larger audiences; those who thought that the college stations offered most advantages referred to the fact that programs are not influenced by commercialism, and that more time is available than when one is dependent upon the commercial station.

The Committee offered the following as its own tentative conclusions from the data and opinions given by the directors of agricultural extension:

1. It is neither necessary nor desirable to prepare *general* educational programs especially for the rural audience. A wider foundation of knowledge common to both rural and urban people is much to be desired, and this is fostered by a single general program of interest to both groups.

2. Judged wholly by information now in hand, it is both necessary and desirable to broadcast to the rural audience informational programs dealing with the specialized problems of agriculture and rural life.

3. It appears desirable to broadcast occasionally a socioeconomic type of program for both rural and urban audiences, such program including a measure of information on the present status and actual advantages of rural life, thereby correcting much of the present misinformation.

4. It appears desirable that both commercial and institutional stations be used in broadcasting rural programs and that educational programs be insured access to adequate facilities over both commercial and educational stations at effective times.

5. It appears desirable that well-distributed educational institutions should maintain broadcasting stations with good mechanical equipment and with adequate funds and personnel. These stations could serve the peculiar and special program needs of the regions in which they are located. Regional program committees representing the various rural interests and viewpoints might well experiment with programs to meet the largest regional opportunity, such committees to be developed on the same regional basis as other committees of the National Advisory Council on Radio in Education. Under such arrangement the commercial networks might carry the rural programs of nation-wide application, leaving the more distinctively regional programs to the local stations, both institutional and commercial.

The National Committee on Education by Radio, Washington, has in process a study of radio programs of agricultural colleges which will make available at an early date much more extensive information than had been assembled from other sources at the time this book went to press.

#### RADIO SERVICES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

By far the most extensive experience in the use of the radio in rural adult education is that of the Radio Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, which has now functioned for about four years. In 1930 and again in 1932, Morse Salisbury, Chief of the Service, described its work and experience before the annual Institute for Education by Radio held at Ohio State University. The data in these addresses are here interpreted.

Radio is generally looked upon by extension workers as their newest tool. At first weather forecasts and market reports were given; now a wide variety of subject matter is dealt with. Every state agricultural extension service now has some experience in broadcasting and it is safe

to say it is regarded as an essential part of the adult education program. (Some administrators say it is a costly method, however.)

The novelty of the radio has worn off in most states, and there is now more hard-headed thinking and planning in regard to its limitations, and how to use its advantages to strengthen the other teaching methods employed by the extension services.

The Radio Service of the Department of Agriculture has the main responsibility for preparing the information given in the programs of the National Farm and Home Hour and the Western Farm and Home Hour. The National Farm and Home Hour is broadcast 5 days each week over a network of 47 National Broadcasting Company associated stations, and the Western Farm and Home Hour 5 days each week over a network of 10 National Broadcasting Company associated stations. These are probably the most widely known distinctly agricultural programs in the United States. The broadcasting company defrays all the expenses for broadcasting facilities, and contributes specially selected music; farm papers and the *United States Daily* provide special agricultural and governmental news items; the United States Department of Agriculture, the Federal Board for Vocational Education, and the state agricultural extension services supply talks, dialogues and playlets on aspects of farming in the various regions, reports of national significance, etc. Occasionally the Farm and Home Hour carries a part of the proceedings of national rural organizations. Because both the National and the Western Farm and Home Hour programs are broadcast throughout large sections of the country, local and individual interests are not stressed. The larger issues, for example, the national problem of land utilization, and the economic situation week by week of the major branches of the farm industry receive most attention.

In addition to contributing to the National and Western

Farm and Home Hours, the Department issues 7 other radio services which are syndicated in mimeographed form to over 200 broadcasting stations. In 18 states these releases from the Federal Department are issued to the state extension services, and these services use such portions of the Federal releases as they wish in their syndicate services to the various radio stations within their states. In the other 30 states at present the Department sends the releases directly to the radio stations, but stands ready to clear the releases through the extension services whenever they wish to undertake a syndicate broadcasting program in coöperation with the stations in their states.

The Federal and state releases usually are presented by announcers of the local stations. However, a few states are pioneering in sending the releases to the county agents stationed in the cities where the broadcasting stations are located, and having the county agents give at least some of the broadcasts, and edit all of them for their application to local conditions. Presentation by the county agent has thus far brought the best results.

The releases issued by the Federal Department vary from 5 to 10 minutes in length and are titled as follows: Housekeepers' Chat (daily); Farm Flashes (daily); Uncle Sam at Your Service (weekly); Primer for Town Farmers (weekly); Chats with the Weatherman (semi-monthly); With Uncle Sam's Naturalists (semi-monthly); The Agricultural Situation Review (monthly). All these programs are of a "service" nature. They attempt to deal with local and individual problems. They are most useful where the state extension services have assumed the responsibility for local programs and have begun to adapt the Federal releases to local conditions. Mr. Salisbury points out that the Department wishes its radio service to strengthen the work of the state extension services and never to compete with them.

Mr. Salisbury also says that the Department of Agricul-

ture staff "believe that radio is a good medium to use in discharging the Department's duty of disseminating information." He adds, however:

Our difficulties come from our inexperience that leads us into errors in using radio. . . . When we set about fitting radio into the framework of agricultural extension we soon bump against the fact that radio broadcasting has quite definite limitations as a method of transferring facts from one person to another. . . . The radio is a scientific development. It is not of itself an educational development.

Radio broadcasts lack reference value. You can't file away a radio talk so it will be at hand to reinforce your memory later on. Radio talks lack pictorial effect. Some sort of pictorial effect is highly necessary to the learning of the things agricultural extension tries to teach. Radio further lacks opportunity for the listener to question the teacher and thus to clear up any misunderstandings the teacher's faulty methods may have left in the listener's mind. . . .

Radio broadcasts can keep farmers and homemakers constantly informed of the new practices coming from experiments of scientists and experience of other farmers and homemakers. Radio broadcasts can rouse the desire of farmers and homemakers to adopt new practices. But radio broadcasts constitute an untrustworthy method for giving farmers and homemakers the detailed instructions and facts they must have before they can adopt the practices.

The most effective way to give farmers and homemakers the detailed instructions and facts is to bring them in contact with a county agricultural agent, to induce them to read bulletins and to apply the directions given in the bulletins, or to get them to attend meetings or demonstrations and apply the detailed instruction given at the meetings or demonstrations. Thus, the primary test of a radio extension broadcast is: "What does this program leave for the listeners to do next?"

I believe that the most effective radio speakers get their points across to the listener by putting their ideas into picture language: simple words, story telling words and constructions. They make their talks informal and conversational. They are not afraid to use the first and second person. They prefer active to passive voice. They give directions in the imperative mood, not the subjunctive. Or they let their stories get the directions across. Their sentences speak easily. They organize their talks

so that the main idea comes before the listener at least three times, preferably more. The touchstone of successful radio speaking is naturalness, the naturalness of a person visiting in a family group. To achieve a natural manner the radio speaker visualizes a family group and addresses himself to it—not to the public.

#### AN EXPERIMENT IN RADIO EDUCATION

The following is the summary of an experiment in methods of presenting facts to farmer listeners as prepared by C. A. Herndon of the Radio Service and published in the 1932 *Yearbook of Agriculture*:

Farmers are jealous of their radio time. They demand that agricultural or informational programs be easy to listen to, and easy to understand and remember. But they want the subject matter concise and definite, concrete and specific. They resent the inclusion of anything which serves as a distraction from the information itself.

These are the main conclusions gathered from reports of farmer listeners who gave their judgment on a series of 16 experimental broadcasts presented by the Radio Service of the Department of Agriculture in coöperation with Station WGY of Schenectady, New York. Further analysis of those reports, however, gives us considerable insight into what makes for easy listening and ready understanding in a radio program.

In each of the test programs, the same agricultural subject matter was given in two forms and the farmers who volunteered to listen and report were asked to choose between the two and give reasons for their preference. In each case, one of the forms was always the narrative style used by the Department in its regular Farm Flashes over Station WGY (Schenectady, N. Y.) and was immediately followed by the same information prepared in another style; for example, the usual news-story style. Each test was repeated a month later but with different subject matter prepared by a different writer.

Tabulation of farmers' reports on the entire series of 16 different broadcasts covering nine different styles of presentation shows that programs prepared in the form of a news-story, as a logically outlined public speech, as a sales talk, as a talk interlarded with jokes and humorous verse, in the form of a fable, and as a narrative, were each less popular with farmer listeners

than were the programs written in the form of experience reports from different farmers, those prepared in the form of simple questions and answers, those in a style requiring listener participation by the use of paper and pencil for taking notes and drawing simple charts, or those in a style in which special care was taken to state minor details in specific, concrete terms.

The reasons given by the listening farmers for their preferences are most illuminating. Running through the whole series of reports is a chain of comments which shows that one of the best ways to get and hold farmer interest is to talk in straightforward, sincere, informal, friendly farmer fashion, and to talk about what other farmers have actually done on their farms.

The real is preferred to the abstract or the fictional. And the strong preference shown for the programs containing many specific details appears to be based on the fact that such details help create the illusion of solid reality in the mind of the listener.

It also appears from these farmer votes and opinions that the span of listener attention is very short. Smoothly running talks are evidently not as easy to understand or as effective as those which are broken up and the attention repeatedly brought to a new focus by question and answer or other such devices.

The favorable comments on the talk requiring the use of pencil and notes show that listeners feel a real need for memory helps and indicate that radio writers and speakers should give more attention to providing such helps.

## CHAPTER XII

### FOLK SCHOOLS

*I sing behind the plough.*—MADS HANSEN.

IN 1928 it was discovered in Askov, Minnesota, a Danish-American rural community, that 106 adults had attended folk schools in Denmark and in the United States. Thirty of these had attended schools in Denmark. Seventy-six persons said they had attended 11 different schools in the United States. There was a strong sentiment in support of the folk school idea. Only one adult interviewed "did not believe in it." It seemed that the older residents were more interested in it than the younger people, for there was no school at Askov. There were those who thought that it would still influence public education in the United States. In the homes of Askov a portrait of Bishop Grundtvig was "the indispensable one." He was *the hero*, venerated by some "to the verge of myth."

A group of Danish ministers meeting in Chicago in 1876 took action to organize folk schools in the United States. Often the principal of the schools established was a minister. Many of those who helped start the schools were students of or relatives of Grundtvig, Kold and other leading spirits of the movement in Denmark. Chester A. Graham, principal of Ashland College, Grant, Michigan, reports that the first Danish folk schools to be organized in this country were those at Elk Horn, Iowa, in 1878; at Ashland, Michigan, in 1882; at West Denmark, Wisconsin, in 1882; at Des Moines, Iowa, in 1884; at Dannebrog, Nebraska, in 1887; at Tyler, Minnesota, in 1888. Of these only the last two have functioned continuously as folk

schools. The Ashland, Michigan, school was reopened as a people's college after being closed for a period. Mr. Graham's studies of the movement have led him to believe that the schools grew up around an interesting personality, and that they tended to wane when that personality was removed for one cause or another. A few seem to have merged with other schools or changed their purposes. No one seems to know how many schools were established. The movement has been strangely neglected by the students and historians of education in the United States. In the course of our studies we have secured information about the experiments at Ashland College, in Michigan, and at the John C. Campbell Folk School, Brasstown, North Carolina, and their programs will be later described.

#### THE THEORY OF THE SCANDINAVIAN FOLK SCHOOLS

Students of adult education vary in their appraisals of the Scandinavian folk schools. Some think they are only "on the borderland" of adult education, although their unique elements are appreciated. Others regard the schools as having made probably the most important contributions yet made to adult education, because they emphasize re-creation of individuals, enlivenment, enlightenment, and "the living word."

To what extent the schools of this type should or can be established in the United States; or to what extent their experience can or should be utilized in public education in the United States—these are other moot questions. Only more extensive experimentation can give us any definite indications. At present discussions of them are almost entirely speculative.

The folk schools of the Scandinavian countries are small, with relatively little equipment, small faculties, and with few financial resources. The students are from eighteen to twenty-five or thirty years of age. Most students attend only one term ranging from three to five months, although

some return for several sessions. Not facts, not mental gymnastics, but enlightened action is the end to be attained from the folk school experience. The humble experiences of the home, the farm, the small community are regarded as having a cultural value greater than books. Faculty are selected for their fitness to express themselves through the "living word," and to contribute to the coöperative endeavors of faculty and students. The cultural subjects of history, geography, sociology, economics, literature, and nature study receive most attention. In Denmark, vocational interests are not stressed. In Norway, Sweden and Finland the schools make use of vocational subjects but they emphasize the cultural rather than practical values. There is much singing. Above all, teachers and students are friends. Techniques of teaching are of secondary consideration. The schools are usually owned by the principal or by associations of individuals. There are no academic requirements for entrance, no examinations, no credits, no marks. The majority of those attending are young farm people. In Denmark, whose schools are probably best known in the United States, between one-fourth and one-third of the adults of the farm population have attended folk schools. This educational experience has given an undergirding to the economic coöperatives, a development sometimes overlooked by students of the Danish economic achievements.

#### ASHLAND COLLEGE

In 1882 a *folkehöjskole* was organized at Ashland, near Grant, Michigan. H. J. Pedersen was the organizer. The people of the Danish settlement erected the building and presented it to Mr. Pedersen. In 1888 Mr. Pedersen went to Tyler, Minnesota, where he organized the Dannebod *Folkehöjskole*, which is still functioning. He sold the school and the property to H. C. Strandskov for one dollar. Mr. Strandskov, who sold it in 1892 to his successor

for one dollar, is still living and is the minister of a rural church among Danes in Iowa. In 1920 the Ashland school was discontinued, and the property remained idle for eight years except for occasional use by Danish young people's societies and church conventions. The title was held by a local board of Danish-Americans. In 1927, one of the members of the board started searching for a person or a group that might revive the school. He was put into communication with J. E. Kirkpatrick, who had been a member of the faculty of Olivet College of Olivet, Michigan. Dr. Kirkpatrick organized a summer school held in 1928. Ashland College was organized and incorporated in 1929. The first winter session was held in 1930. There have now been five summer sessions, 1928-32, and three winter sessions, 1930-32. In 1928 Chester A. Graham came to the community as a minister of the Grant Community Church. Following Dr. Kirkpatrick's death Mr. Graham was elected principal. The "regular" session of the College is that held in the winter and is primarily for a "youth group" of 18 to 25 or 30 years. The summer school is for persons of all ages, except that no one under 18 is admitted. The college endeavors to secure urban and rural students. Its interests are by no means limited to rural life. Students are accepted without regard to their previous academic training. There are also no requirements regarding attendance, no credits, no assignments, no examinations. The residents of the community in which it is located have a vital interest and a direct relationship to the school. Many activities are for both the students—who come from many communities—and the people of the vicinity. "Ashland Folk School has no significance as a school apart from its relation to the neighborhood in which it is located," asserts Mr. Graham. "It has been called 'A Rural Thought Center.' People from the farms and the villages feel at home here. The school would not serve its function if they did not. Here the people, young and old, gather regularly for

recreation, for lecture and discussion, and for the deep culture of fellowship so necessary in any civilization."

The first announcement declared:

Teachers and students alike will regard themselves as experimenters and learners together. All will be seeking, not for additional information, but for a better understanding of themselves and of life. Students who have had significant experiences may be asked to speak or to lead discussions. All members of the staff understand that their part in the program will be determined by the interests, desires and decisions of the entire school group.

The summer school of 1932 concentrated on "the present crisis." The announcement emphasized, as did the one of 1928, that "life situations and life problems take the place of formal courses. . . . Drama, reading aloud, group singing, folk recreation, and sharing in the life of the surrounding community will all be a part of the educational experience."

The three winter sessions for those of 18 to 30 years of age have been in session for about two and a half months each, from the first of January to the middle of March. The announcements emphasize that the goal is "enlightened education." "The natural interests of a folk school group leads into all kinds of subjects, but no 'courses' are taught. . . . Students learn to find themselves with others who are seeking to be intelligent. . . . Teachers and lecturers seek to share their best insight rather than to instruct. . . . The school wants to start with the interests of the students."

In 1931 the cost per student for board, room, tuition, and use of library for 10 weeks was \$125; in 1932 it was \$95. Special arrangements can be made to attend a half session or shorter periods or for week-end visits. Considerable numbers have been at the school for week-ends only.

Although the school terms cover only a small part of the year, the building is open for twelve months for recrea-

tion, for special meetings, conferences and for the use of the organizations of the community. In addition to the tuition fees of students, the college receives voluntary contributions from friends, former students and residents of the community.

#### THE JOHN C. CAMPBELL FOLK SCHOOL

In 1925 the John C. Campbell Folk School was established at Brasstown, N. C., by Mrs. Olive D. Campbell, Miss Marguerite Butler, and a small group of co-workers. It was named in memory of John C. Campbell, director of the Southern Highland division of the Russell Sage Foundation, who spent his life in educational work among the people of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. Mrs. Campbell and Miss Butler had previously made intensive studies of the folk schools of Denmark, Sweden, and Finland. The school is a venture in adult education that is closely linked with the coöperative economic program of the community, and the enterprise as a whole is an effort for "the permanent upbuilding of a rural civilization in the mountains." The budget of the school has been raised by means of assistance from three missionary organizations, several foundation grants, and, in large part, the contributions of individuals. It is an independent organization. Brasstown is a small rural community in the extreme southwestern corner of North Carolina. It was chosen because of its agricultural possibilities, and because the citizens showed much interest in a school which, as they put it, "would build up the country and not make just preachers and teachers."

"The school has its inspiration in the folk schools of Denmark," says Mrs. Campbell. But the present organization "is naturally an adaptation. Primarily it is to help people enrich their life economically, socially, culturally. Though it is called a school, it has three distinct sides, the demonstration farm, community activities, and the school

proper." All of the activities are closely related, but to Mrs. Campbell the heart of the project is a Danish Folk School.

One of the early bulletins of the school told of the work of the neighbors of the school, the residents of the community. "The faded yellow homestead on our farm, sadly in need of paint and repairs, has become a trim gray farmhouse with green trimmings and rose-covered trellises. Dilapidated outbuildings have been torn down and transformed into a garage and toolhouse. The uncertain and muddy well has been cleaned and deepened. We have mended fences and put in a garden. If you could see our neighbors busily at work about the place, you would understand how we have become so soon well acquainted." Soon these groups of neighbors were discussing the organization of a women's community club or the savings and loan association. The farm, with its continuous program of soil-building, stock breeding and feeding, is not only a valuable educational experience to those who work upon it, but serves as a practical demonstration. "The community is helping in a remarkably fine way. Eight hundred and fourteen days of free labor have already been given, 72 of them with team." Thus it was that enough equipment was secured so that the regular students might live at the school in winter.

A comprehensive report covering five years of activity was issued in 1931. It aimed to restate the aims and to review the progress that had been made.

Our first effort in Brasstown was to get together on a community basis. . . . Almost spontaneously, in the middle of the first year, the Women's Community Club came into being, followed later by the Men's Club. The men have concentrated more or less closely on matters pertaining to agricultural practice. The women have been the moving spirits in all kinds of social and cultural activities; they are the backbone of the Co-operative Handicraft Association.

Our own first coöperative, the Brasstown Savings and Loan Association, a credit union, came into being the first spring

with a membership of 27 and a share capital of \$155. The last monthly report showed 85 members and a capital of over \$2,000. The Association has been able to declare a dividend of 4 per cent to shareholders and depositors, after leaving a reserve fund of \$150.

A Farmers' Association, organized in 1927, was followed shortly by our major effort, the Mountain Valley Creamery. The history of these two associations, which began with almost no capital, has been one of struggle to exist and to be understood. The creamery, in particular, has had to grow in the face of small production, poor agricultural practices, and low butter-fat prices. The farmers, however, appreciate the steady income—a total of approximately \$1,000 distributed in cream checks every month; and suspicion and doubt are gradually giving way to faith and even enthusiasm as the members begin to grasp the purpose and plan. . . . Our creamery took first prize for butter in competition with ten others in North Carolina at the State Fair in Raleigh in 1930. . . . We may some day amalgamate farmers' association, corn mill, and creamery. . . .

We are beginning to be concerned over questions which touched us little before: public health; law enforcement; juvenile delinquency; normal, wholesome recreation; the beauty of our community.

The winter school for young men and women developed slowly. Mrs. Campbell says it was not until 1931 that the sessions were what a true folk school should be. "From November to March, sixteen young people—averaging in age about nineteen, high school graduates and those with but a few grades—have come regularly from nine in the morning to three-thirty or four in the afternoon, with a varied evening program from seven to nine." A large majority of the students have lived together at the school. Students must be at least seventeen years old—preferably twenty and over. Character and a serious desire to learn are basic requirements for admission; scholastic standing is not considered. No examinations or credits are given. The course is not intended to take the place of the public school, although some elementary work is offered. Its main purpose is to give young people new horizons, inter-

ests, and ideals, which will help them to live better the life of every day. The majority of students work for their board by coming early or remaining at the close of the term for a period. They earn and learn in the house and shop and on the farm. The farm, with its continuous program of soil-building, stock breeding and feeding, is not only an educational experience to those who work upon it, but serves as a practical demonstration of how the basic industry of the section, dairying, may be developed under local conditions.

The morning program has been concerned with the more strictly cultural subjects—history, geography, geology, literature, the Bible, art appreciation and work in reading, writing and arithmetic. In the afternoons, the activities are weaving, sewing, cooking, carving, woodworking, agriculture, field surveying, forestry. Most subjects are taught through informal discussions and activities. A reforestation project has been in process at the school.

## CHAPTER XIII

### COMMUNITY STUDY AND ORGANIZATION

*What dream shall we dream or what labor shall we undertake? I answer: The first thing to do is to create and realize the feeling for the community and break up the evil and petty isolation of man from man.*

—GEORGE W. RUSSELL (AE).

MUCH adult education has been done and will undoubtedly be done by organizations which do not have "education" in their names or which do not profess to have very definite educational purposes. So varied are the processes of adult education that it is frequently difficult to discern when it is going on. It seems fairly evident at the present stage of rural adult education in the United States that community organization and adult education are very closely related and are probably destined to be. In this chapter, therefore, we interpret four enterprises which differ considerably in method and organization and which are essentially engaged in processes of adult education.

#### KENOSHA COUNTY STUDIES ITSELF

Over a period of six years, a group of officers of various organizations in Kenosha County, Wisconsin, have been systematically studying the situation in their county and working out policies and programs on the basis of the social data gathered. Faculty members of the Wisconsin College of Agriculture assisted in the venture.

J. H. Kolb of the College, who has been related to the program, says of it: "Two principles are involved in the experiment of rural citizens studying their own community affairs. The first is that learning starts with the known, the near-at-hand, the familiar, the experienced. The sec-

ond is that facts have more interest and motivating power when you gather them yourself than when someone else attempts to hand them to you."

The self-study began shortly after the city of Kenosha had won the Wisconsin Better Cities Contest of 1925. That event aroused considerable interest throughout the county in the possibilities of a group of citizens gathering information and acting upon it. Although the city had won the state contest, it had stood eighth among ten cities in its class in town-country relations. Naturally interest was aroused as to why this was so. A group of leaders held conferences with representatives of the College of Agriculture, the University, state departments and state organizations. It was decided that a plan should be worked out to study rural conditions and the relations of the city to the surrounding rural population. A county committee was appointed with lay persons as chairman and secretary. Sub-committees were appointed for each of five separate inquiries which were determined upon: education, recreation, health, social welfare, and farm and home. A professional worker living and working in the county was assigned to each committee in an advisory capacity. Officers of state departments and organizations, and of the University, also served as advisers. As many as seventy-five citizens have been members of the five committees organized.

Members of each committee gathered information and made analyses of it. On the basis of this information recommendations were made for improvement of conditions. Thereupon, the committee members worked through the organizations of which they were members to put the recommendations into practice. It was found, for example, that the county had some real educational problems. There were ten schools which each had enrolments of less than ten pupils. Furthermore many of the small school districts were near larger ones. The survey committee recom-

mended larger school districts so as to secure a wider tax base. Plans have been worked out for larger schools. Six districts have already changed from one-teacher to two-teacher schools.

It was also evident that the county lacked a positive recreation program. There were at least 119 local recreation places operated on a commercial basis. In addition to these, there was little organized recreation except that which went on in connection with the meetings of various organizations. It was decided that there should be a positive program of recreation, to be developed by the rural people themselves, and that steps should be taken to select and train lay leaders to carry on the program. These recommendations were carried out speedily. Numerous training schools and institutes were given by university staff members for drama coaches, music directors and officers of adult and junior organizations. In 1931 a 14 weeks' course in dramatics was given by a member of the University's speech department. In 1930 forty groups put on plays, and throughout 1931 and 1932 the amateur dramatic program has gone on extensively. County tournaments have been held. In 1930 the first county-wide music festival was held, with about 500 people participating. In 1931 and 1932 the event was repeated. Arthur F. Wileden, of the College of Agriculture, who has also coöperated with the county, says of this program: "In all of these events the emphasis is on enjoyment, fine quality of production, and the engendering of a coöperative spirit."

Social welfare problems have received systematic attention. A county child welfare board was recommended to the county board, which immediately decided to create it. "This board is studying child welfare conditions in the county, helping investigate cases, and with the supervision of children when necessary, and sometimes helping with the administration of funds." Child study clubs have been organized throughout the county. "Child psychology,

boys' gangs, and methods of child management and discipline were studied."

The whole process has been looked upon as a technique of adult education. Mr. Wileden writes the following brief appraisal of it from this point of view: "This self-study would have meant a big undertaking for any group of people. To add to the difficulties, it was a pioneer experiment, and at almost every turn the local committees had to feel their way and learn by first trying things out. Needless to say, many false moves were made. Likewise even county and state leaders and counselors could not always agree on proper methods of procedure or desirable plans for correction. They had to iron out their difficulties with the local committees. In other words, it was a courageous experiment in adult education for all concerned, and much credit must go to the workers who five years ago first launched the survey, who guided it in its early stages, and to many of them who followed through to its completion. Many of these are still carrying on, and will carry on for the years to come."

#### DISCOVERING RURAL COMMUNITY TRENDS

A combination of the community "scoring" idea with the social survey method in the interest of adult education is at present in process in five rural communities of Missouri working in coöperation with the College of Agriculture. Henry J. Burt of the College has published a bulletin describing the purposes and methods and the evidences of participation on the part of lay persons. He says that "local collaboration is necessary to guarantee the continuity of the study. . . ." The purpose is "to derive an annual index number to show the status and trend of the major interests in the participating rural communities. . . . From the standpoint of the communities the practical object is to provide a continuous service of information on important community interests."

Rural community leaders are always confronted with the necessity of selecting ideas and programs offered to them by county, state and national agencies. This process offers unusual difficulties to the average community. It has little information on which to judge the value of what the organizer or the promoter offer. Therefore, the five communities participating are working on the theory that "the proper way to select such programs is to find out the status of the important community interests, with special reference to the status of these in comparable communities, and that an effective way to find the items needing attention is to measure each important interest annually."

The published report gives data for the year 1930 for the first three of the five communities that are now participating in the project. The five interests to be appraised annually are: public schools; health; utilities and public service; finance, wealth and trade; civic and religious. By repeating the study annually, trends can be discovered. Some of the basic population and economic data about the communities for the year 1930 are the following:

COMPARATIVE STATUS OF THREE COMMUNITIES

COM- MUNITY	AREA SQUARE MILES	POPU- LATION	PERSONS PER HOUSE- HOLD	AVERAGE YEARS OF RESIDENCE OF HEAD OF FAMILY	PER CENT OF FAMI- LIES OWN- ING HOMES	ASSESSED VALUA- TION OF PROPERTY	
						PER CAPITA	PER HOUSEHOLD
A	37.6	512	4.08	25.0	54.3	\$3,624	\$14,962
B	31.1	662	3.73	24.3	57.6	\$2,732	\$10,216
C	48.8	814	4.27	35.2	60.4	\$1,975	\$ 5,866

Maps are made of each community locating all homes, schools, churches, places of business and recreation, etc. Furthermore, in order to make up an index number, a standard must be determined first. Accumulated data do not exist for the making of these standards. Therefore community specialists have worked out standards of nor-

mal interest, against which each community is scored. The standard or normal interest is regarded as 100. If a community shows normal interest, its score would therefore be 100. The final scoring for the first three communities for the year 1930 was:

COMMUNITY										INDEX NUMBER
A	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	61.5
B	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	59.3
C	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	42.1

When the findings of the study are presented to the community, continuation committees for each interest are appointed to work during the year following to improve the status of the community. The work of these committees is to study the data assembled, make recommendations for improvement of conditions, and endeavor to secure the adoption of the recommendations. It is planned by the College of Agriculture to coöperate with as many interested communities as time and financial resources permit. After a period of years, appraisals are to be made of progress in social control and in adult education.

#### AWAKENING COMMUNITIES

In Louisiana over three hundred rural communities are coöperating in programs prepared by the Agricultural Extension Service under the leadership of Miss Mary Mims. The first step is the awakening of the community. This is followed by constructive suggestions for activities which will revitalize and rehabilitate it and secure more normal functioning. Through personal contacts, Miss Mims brings the following message to the communities, many of which have been forlorn and discouraged: "You can make your community what you want it to be. It is built on the image of the people who live in it. By the magic of your vision you change it, transform it as you will. . . . Human beings are like plants; they grow by sending their

roots deep into their own native soil." Four types of development are encouraged: economic, social, civic, health.

The plan for community building proceeds on the theory that the organized community is not a club. There must be no dues, no selection of members, no roll call. "No one is asked to become a member," says Miss Mims. "Every man, woman and child, of any age, who lives in a community is a member of it, whether or not he wants to be." The first step is a community meeting addressed by the state community worker. At this meeting a chairman, a co-chairman, a secretary are elected. Only one committee is appointed. That is asked to report eight objectives for the community at the next meeting. It consists of the three officers, the superintendent or principal of the school, teachers in the community, the home demonstration and farm demonstration agents, and four leading lay people from different sections of the community. At the second community meeting the committee presents eight objectives for the community. The entire group is asked to discuss them and to name the four which are to be undertaken first. These four objectives having been determined, committees of 12 men and women for each one are appointed. Each community organization also has several standing committees; for example, one on athletics, one on welfare, one on music, one on program. "Perhaps the community chooses, as its first objective the coöperative buying of fertilizer, or seed, in order to save money. Perhaps it chooses the planting of some commercial truck crop, on a large enough scale to make carload shipments. . . . It may be the improvement of the school grounds, church grounds or cemeteries. It may be planting native trees or shrubs along the streets or highways. It may be the beautifying of the home grounds; the installation of running water or lights in every home. In one county, eight communities chose as their civic objective one year the planting of an old fashioned flower garden for every

home. Shrubs were expensive, but all could have flowers. As a result, one hundred and ten farm homes soon had gardens, each a mass of color and beauty."

Health communities have promoted baby clinics, nutrition classes for mothers, all-year-round gardens which supply fresh vegetables, better drainage demonstrations, disease prevention. Social objectives have been the organization of choruses or community orchestras, the holding of community fairs. As the original objectives are attained, new ones are added.

The story of "Three Corners"—not its real name—is one of the illustrations of results of community organizations cited by Miss Mims. It was one of the dirtiest of towns. There was no evidence of civic pride. The people were divided into factions, not two but many more. "Organization was effected and the first objective chosen was the consolidation of the four schools into one. This was finally accomplished, not without much effort, of course. A large new building was erected. . . . The school grounds have been planted with shrubs and trees. The town has a cleaning day once a month. Oaks or pecans have been planted all along the streets. The roads have been graded." All of the families in one neighborhood are making a systematic study of income and expenditures and developing new plans for farm and home management.

In several parishes "folk schools" extending over a week have been organized, and some of the elements of the Danish schools have been adopted. It is customary to use the school buses to transport the adults to the sessions of the schools, which are held in the afternoons. Each of the schools has been run on a budget of about \$500, which has been raised locally by means of contributions from the various organizations. One community has held what it calls an "agricultural chautauqua."

Thus the organized community is regarded as an agency for fostering continuing education.

## A PROGRAM FOR RURAL VERMONT

In Vermont a professor of zoölogy, H. F. Perkins of the State University, became interested in eugenics, and in 1927 started a long-time program for a eugenics survey in the state. By 1928 his interest in eugenics had led him to a consideration of all the aspects of rural life in the state. Through his efforts and those of others whose coöperation he had enlisted, the Vermont Commission on Country Life was organized, with about 100 members which later expanded to about 200. A plan was drawn up for a comprehensive program for the future. The research program was to take three years. Through the Social Science Research Council a foundation grant was secured and Dr. H. C. Taylor, who had been chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics of the Department of Agriculture, was named as director of the survey. It was completed in 1931 and published in book form.

The two hundred persons who made up the Commission were made members of subcommittees on the following:

- The People
- Topography and Climate
- Soils
- Agriculture, Forestry and Woodworking
- Summer Residents and Tourists
- Fish, Game and Wild Life
- Land Utilization
- Home and Community Life
- Recreation
- Medical Facilities
- Educational Facilities
- The Handicapped
- A Vermont Foundation
- Rural Government
- Citizenship
- Religious Forces
- Conservation of Traditions and Ideals

The Commission encouraged the publication of works containing biographies of well-known Vermonters and on the literature of the state.

The findings of the Commission outline a long-time program for the people of the state. Special attention is being paid at present to those aspects of the report which require legislative action, and the attention of the legislature will be called to certain projects each year by the Commission. Adult education and libraries were studied by subcommittees of the Committee on Educational Facilities. Before the report was published an experiment in improving library service on a regional basis in one section of the state was begun by means of a grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

A study of adult education needs in twelve towns was made by Dorothy C. Walter, a special field worker of the commission. It was found that there were thirty-eight agencies in these towns that were contributing something or might contribute to adult education. On the basis of these studies, the outstanding needs of the rural people of Vermont were stated to be:

- Extension of library service

- Completion of elementary education of illiterates

- Speech readers' clubs for the deaf

- Vocational guidance

- Greater public responsibility for those leaving school before eighteen years of age

- Lists of adult education opportunities available in the state

- Lists of material available for non-professional leaders in adult education activities

- Periodic conferences of all agencies and institutions of adult education in the state

A state conference was held in June, 1931, to consider the status of adult education in Vermont and to organize for future activity. It was the sense of the meeting that a state council for adult education should be organized to

act as a unifying agency for all adult educational activities with a view to avoiding duplication of effort and to secure the most efficient coöperation. . . . The functions of the proposed State Council for Adult Education are as follows:

To maintain a clearing house and to undertake . . . publicity for the agencies now at work.

To "adopt" the regional library project which is now under way in 25 selected towns in the North Western part of the state, watch its progress, support its purpose, and spread its idea, with a view to extending such service to the entire state.

Issue an occasional bulletin of information about adult education projects to local groups and individuals.

Conduct a speakers' bureau for clubs, community groups, on adult education.

Improve understanding of the adult educational opportunities available in the state.

Promote a general program of parent education in line with the most progressive thinking in this field.



PART III

THE IMPROVEMENT OF RURAL ADULT  
EDUCATION



## CHAPTER XIV

### THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN IMPROVEMENT

*It is worth while to stop for a moment and to review  
critically the work done and the methods employed*

—FRANZ ALEXANDER.

UP to this point we have tried to interpret faithfully important developments in rural life, and the aims, methods and results of individuals, organizations and institutions engaged in rural adult education. In this chapter we attempt a critical review of what is going on and a statement of the problems involved in the improvement of adult education throughout rural America. In the next and final chapter we give our conception of the program needed. Although we draw upon the ideas and experiences of many other persons, it is obvious that this Part contains a considerable degree of personal judgment.

#### AN UNFAVORABLE SITUATION

As this study is being completed, the total rural situation is considerably less favorable for the development of rural adult education than when it was begun almost five years ago. Even in the so-called prosperous days of 1927-29 when agricultural products had a considerably higher price level, and debts and taxes were more easily paid than at present, the difficulties were great. Now most of them are greater. In 1928 there was still a movement of population from the farm to the towns and the cities, which took with it many able persons. In 1932 there was a steady movement back to the country on the part of the urban

unemployed, but these newcomers were not welcomed with open arms. For the immediate outlook seems to be that the addition of numbers of these people to rural life can only lower rural standards of living generally, and may even shift a good deal of the relief burden from the budgets of cities to those of counties and to the neighborliness of families on the land that are already poor.

As we write, too, the literature of rural life and the observations of the well-informed indicate that the psychological situation is one of widespread discouragement. "Hearings" among farmers conducted in several states for the purpose of securing personal testimony from farmers indicate that there are roughly four groups among the farm population as they face their situations. First, there are those who go along not much concerned, feeling that there is nothing they can do, that things turned for the better before and will do so again. Second, there are those who are worried—sometimes to the point of disorganization; or they are supercritical and sensitive, spreading vague rumors. Third, there are those talking the language of social revolt. Fourth, there are those who are determined to become more self-sufficing, to go back to the pioneer days, to discard machinery, to trade as little as possible—they even talk of "seceding" from present trade arrangements with the towns and the cities. Thus an unusually difficult economic situation increases the normal handicaps of those living at distances from the centers of population.

#### AN APPRAISAL OF PAST EXPERIENCE

It seems evident to us that there is no coherent movement of rural adult education in the United States. There are few spontaneous local developments. There are no folk developments with their roots deep in the soil, such as have taken place in some other countries. Among the people there exists no widespread conviction in regard to

the values of adult learning. Furthermore, it would appear that the leadership does not yet exist which would make a widespread movement possible.

Looking over the developments described in Part II, we note that the movement for organizing county libraries has practically stopped because of the depression—that since 1926, the time of the comprehensive study, progress has only been made against great odds in bringing books to rural people. The ordinary public school can not be looked to for leadership in rural adult education for various reasons, for example, its untrained leadership and its inadequate financial resources. Only when the state supplements its personnel and resources can there be worthwhile programs. In agriculture and home-making there is a national plan for rural adult education, but it must be recognized that that development is due chiefly to adequate Federal and state funds that were largely initiated under the stress of the war-time demands for food conservation and production. The adequate state and Federal appropriations held up during the fortunate post-war years, even down to the fiscal year 1931–32. At this writing at least a few of the state legislatures are the scenes of hard battles on the part of agricultural and extension leaders to hold their appropriations. At least one governor has been reported to favor the discontinuance of all state appropriations for agricultural extension. Now that the states and counties are in a period of heavy debt and declining income, a real battle for extension is being fought for the first time. It will be demonstrated at some time after this book is published—perhaps by 1934 or 1935—how much the rank and file of rural people believe in agricultural extension. The main test will be how hard they are willing to work to hold the appropriations before county boards and state legislations.

The typical rural church does nothing significant to realize its opportunities in adult education; only a small

minority of specially trained clergymen capable of carrying on a program of adult education are as yet functioning in the country churches. Parent education shows promising beginnings, but the ways and means of more extensive organization for it have not yet been worked out. In the cultural arts we have real stirrings in regard to which we may perhaps well repeat that they *may* become a major aspect of rural adult education. College and university extension, as distinguished from that in agriculture, is still too largely urban, although many of the services are much more needed in the country than in the cities. Progress here seems to wait more upon imaginative adjustments and earnest coöperation between the administrators of university and of agricultural extension than upon any other factor. The numerous church colleges still need both the vision and the trained personnel in order to conduct educational work among the adults in their areas.

The farm organizations go steadily along their ways, not yet realizing the possibilities in education along the ways, not yet grasping their educational opportunities. The accomplishments here and there are important—but when many leaders learn educational techniques they will become more so. Whether we will or can organize Danish folk schools in America, or how much we will use of their methods in other schools, are still open questions. The radio is a new instrument which many educators grasped with too much enthusiasm; now its limitations are being soberly pondered; when these limitations are better understood the radio may function much more usefully than at present. The agencies of community study and organization are of peculiar interest to the adult educator; much education is being carried on by them; but community development has had so many ups and downs in the United States, and the community concept is so vague, that it is as yet uncertain how much reliance should be placed upon these endeavors.

## THE MAIN PROBLEMS

The main problems involved in the development of better rural adult education in the United States seem to us to be the following:

1. How can the financial resources be discovered or made available for rural adult education? Farm property is already more heavily taxed in proportion to income than other forms of property. This has been revealed by investigation after investigation during the past ten years. It is being stated by rural educators that elementary and secondary education can not be adequately financed by means of our present antiquated state, county and local tax systems. If that be true, can adult education possibly be financed from the same system? Is the main possibility that of widening the tax base, of making greater use of state income taxes, of developing state funds which will supplement local resources? What possibilities are there in voluntary efforts? It is being thought in some quarters that rural people do not take to memberships in associations as much as urban people. Yet numerous local organizations with membership dues do flourish. Although no objective information is available it seems that in proportion to income, rural people join voluntary associations about as well as urban. Is there any good reason why many adult education activities could not be financed by these methods?

2. How shall library services for rural people be developed? It is fairly generally agreed that the basic development of rural adult education must be that of making a reasonably adequate library service available. Does the expansion of the county library now depend largely upon increased state funds? Would a national fund for subsidizing a variety of demonstrations be useful? In view of the agitation for consolidating counties now reported to be in progress in 20 states, would a larger unit comprising

a district of several counties be in some states a better unit than the county?

3. How shall more trained leaders be developed for adult education organizations and institutions? Programs and finances depend to a large degree upon the people who have charge of them. One of the main shortages in rural life is the supply of professionally trained persons who can exercise functions of leadership in adult education. What means for the encouragement of professional study are the most promising? Would a few fellowships be of peculiar value to rural groups? At what institutions should potential professional leaders study? Would well-directed but informal seminars held in various regions at regular intervals be of value?

4. How shall healthy experimentation be encouraged? It does not appear that the immediate future will be a time of expansion for rural adult education; it may be exactly the opposite. In such a time as this, would a variety of experiments be appropriate? Could we learn from experimentation how to organize and expand when the opportunity came? What conditions are necessary for worthwhile experimentation? How large a proportion of leaders in rural adult education have the inclination and willingness to experiment? How does one acquire an experimental attitude? What are the philosophical implications of the experimental attitude in relation to practical organization?

5. How shall more contacts be secured between individuals and organizations, and how shall relationships between them be improved? Rural educational workers of all sorts are more isolated than urban. They lack the stimulus of contacts with persons having common interests. This isolation sometimes makes for indifference, even for conflicts, between rural and urban educators. How can more systematic contacts be developed between rural and urban adult educators; between state and voluntary agencies; between isolated workers having common interests?

What means will best further mutual understanding and greater coöperation between agencies and individuals? How great a degree of coördination is desirable or practical at the present stage? What can be attempted in the counties; in the states; nationally?

6. How can research in rural adult education be encouraged, selected and directed? There has been relatively little research in rural adult education. The most extensive is that done by the agricultural extension service of the Department of Agriculture in regard to its own work. What kinds of research can and should be done by organizations and institutions actively engaged in programs? What kinds of studies should be made by independent agencies? What part can the universities and agricultural colleges play in a systematic research program which will assist in evaluating past experience and in re-directing activities?

7. In what units shall various rural adult education activities be organized? Considerable confusion exists today in regard to the desirable units of organization. We have referred to it briefly in connection with library services. Is the county unit antiquated or at least undesirable for certain activities? Which activities are best organized intensively on a local basis? Which are best organized extensively, on perhaps a state basis? Which require relatively little local supervision? Which require relatively intensive local supervision for efficient functioning? To what extent may research and experimentation help to give answers to these questions?

Having stated what we regard as the main problems, we are ready to give our conception of the program needed for the improvement of adult education in rural America.

## CHAPTER XV

### THE PROGRAM NEEDED

*What the enemy has taken from us by force from without,  
we must regain by education from within.*

—THE SIGN OVER THE DOOR OF A DANISH FOLK SCHOOL.

THE sign above was placed over the door of a Danish Folk School two generations ago, shortly after Denmark had lost the unfortunate war with Germany and with it the provinces of Schleswig and Holstein. There was a high proportion of illiteracy among the people, and a discouragement probably greater than that existing in the rural areas of the United States today. The people were brooding over their losses, and their hopeless prospects. Then an educator ventured to say that all that was lost could be replaced—"by education from within." He meant from within the country and from within the people themselves. That education from within brought the results predicted is now a matter of history, to which reference was made in Chapter XII on "Folk Schools."

Another Dane identified with the folk schools made a generalization thus: "A people politically and economically ruined is not a people destroyed." It seems appropriate to recall that when Henry C. Wallace was secretary of agriculture he said the United States was capable of creating a rural civilization finer than any the world has ever known. Numerous country life leaders believe at this very moment that that is still the case. They hold that we have no such situation as faced the Danes in 1867.

What needs to be said is in substance this:

*"The leadership and opportunities which the trends of American life have taken out of rural communities can still be replaced by education from within."*

#### THE OBJECTIVE

The objective, as we see it, is to begin procedures which will insure the more adequate functioning of the work already under way, particularly by providing opportunities for:

(1) A greater degree of experimentation particularly by existing organizations than is going on at present;

(2) More contacts between rural adult educators which will enable them to educate each other;

(3) The selection and direction of the research that is needed;

(4) The development of greater financial resources by governmental and voluntary means;

(5) Better planning and strategy on a state and county basis;

(6) Better provision for the training of professional workers;

(7) National guidance and consideration of the above and of the discussion of problems, methods and goals.

If these things are done, redirection and adjustments will be worked out within the enterprises now going on; new work will be better planned than has been the case; expansion will be more likely to take place when there is real need for it.

The most adequate provision for rural adult education, as we have noted, is the agricultural extension service for instruction in subjects related to agriculture and home-making. Compared with this, opportunities for cultural education are much less numerous, although undoubtedly they were on the increase up to the time of the depression. There are several ways whereby opportunities for cultural study can be increased. First, more cultural activities

could be permitted within the agricultural extension service by giving liberal interpretation of the laws in the light of a changing situation and of the development of new aims. Second, university extension, more needed probably in country than in city, could be made more available to the rural population. Third, it seems entirely likely that cultural activities will be carried on by a wide variety of voluntary community organizations, some of which may never profess to be educational at all. The evidence is that the "interest group" is taking the place of the old locality group, at least in many sections of rural America.

Ultimately, rural and urban education in all of their forms should be the same. Even at present, with diversity of culture and organization, the more general objectives of rural education may be the same as urban. Only the more specific and secondary objectives need have any variation, and these only because of special needs and shortages of rural life which are discovered by research. It is important, too, that rural adult education be not developed as a separate enterprise, but that even now it should be closely related and to some degree integrated with other forms of rural and urban education. We mean to indicate some ways whereby beginnings may be made in this direction. Again, as Kenyon L. Butterfield has reiterated so often: "We must not allow adult education to become a separate category of education. *Continuing* education is the inclusive need."

Finally, in the framing of our program we have tried to be guided by the principle of catholicity. No one can yet make any conclusive judgments in regard to the American experience in rural adult education. We do not know what specific aims, what particular techniques are of most value. For the present and for the immediate future there should be diversity in aims, in methods, in organization. We have tried to be interested in both the old and the new. We have tried to study the individuals and institutions that

are at the right, at the left, and near the middle of the road. For values may be found at all of these points.

#### SUGGESTIONS FOR A NATIONAL PROGRAM

We hold that statesmanship in rural adult education calls for:

1. *More experimentation and the development of an experimental attitude among more professional educators.* In the course of our discussions of this proposal an educator who objected said: "When we experiment we do not propagate." To which the obvious answer is that it is true; but we have had much unwise propagation; experimentation should teach us better methods of development.

Throughout rural life and rural education generally there has been little evidence of an experimental attitude. We submit that this is a conspicuous lack, and that one of the avenues for improvement is in a greater degree of experimentation. It is possible for persons carrying on organization or institutional work to have an experimental attitude toward it—at least part of the time, or in regard to some parts of it. It should also be possible to inaugurate more projects on a frankly experimental basis, so labeled publicly. Experimentation should be particularly possible in parent education, the use of the radio, the development of participation in the cultural arts, community organizations which can carry adult education programs. There is still plenty of room for experimentation in regard to the desirable units for organizing library service, in regard to the kinds of activities religious organizations can best carry on, in regard to the ways whereby the public schools can take on responsibilities for adult education. The agricultural extension service has regarded a number of projects as experimental, and there seems to be no reason why the method can not continue to be used. The universities have not exhausted the possibilities of making their extension services available to those who live at great dis-

tance; experimentation can still go on and should yield results. The church colleges which are in rural areas should experiment whole-heartedly to find out how they can best assist adults.

2. *The improvement of financing of adult education in rural areas.* This can come only through changes in state and local tax systems and through voluntary organizations which can be developed for a variety of special activities, such as the arts. Specialists in public finance seem to agree that the main difficulty of states, counties, and townships is that the taxation of real property, particularly farm property, has been overdone. The need is to develop taxation in relation to ability to pay, and this applies particularly to the state and local levies. It has been demonstrated in the state of New York, for example, that state taxes on real property could be greatly reduced, and new forms of revenue provided. Only the extension of this principle gives any hope of financing adult education through the rural schools. It is a practical impossibility to ask the local school districts to vote additional taxes for adult education. They are already struggling with elementary and secondary education; and in half the states they are able to do what they are only because there are equalization funds, whereby the more fortunate sections are able to assist the less fortunate school districts. Furthermore, if there is to be any effective public rural adult education, there must be specialists and organizers provided by state and not local funds. For the work of the local teachers and supervisory officers must be supplemented and enriched from sources outside the community.

It seems entirely likely, too, that the development of rural library service will come only when the state governments undertake more responsibility. A national library fund for experimental and demonstration purposes would also be useful. There is already valuable experience in the use of a national fund to develop rural public health work

by the United States Public Health Service. It has amounted to about \$100,000 annually for regular work. It has been administered solely from the point of view of starting new work. The subsidies granted to any one county have been comparatively small; they have been made for a few years only, on a declining scale. This national fund has undoubtedly been a big factor in the development of rural public health service. Might we not do as well for county libraries? Perhaps relatively more money per county would be needed, but the idea of a national fund for development purposes is receiving greater and greater acceptance among those interested in library extension.

3. *The selection and direction of research projects which will supply information now lacking and form the basis for new developments.* The Agricultural Extension Service has made valuable studies of the various methods which have been in use throughout the system; some research has been done in rural public education which is of great value to adult educators; studies of rural organization are going on; certain needs, such as that for library service, have been discovered. A research program that could be coördinated and directed is much needed. Isolated and unrelated research projects are, of course, of use, but coördination ought to increase their value. Through the Social Science Research Council comprehensive programs of needed research in rural sociology and rural economics have been worked out, largely by the collaboration of specialists. A group of rural adult educators could within a short time formulate a list of the most needed research projects which could probably to a considerable extent be carried out within the existing resources of institutions and organizations.

We suggest that one of the most useful types of research would be an extension of the studies made by J. H. Kolb and his co-workers at the Wisconsin College of Agriculture

of minimum essentials and standards for various services. He considered the high school, the hospital, the local library. We believe that a useful project, carried on in say a half dozen states at the same time, could be worked out to evaluate experience in regard to minimum essentials and standards for the maintenance of adult education programs. Particularly could past experience in regard to units of organization be evaluated.

4. *Greater encouragement of professional study by workers in rural adult education.* We believe that a few fellowships, conservatively administered, would be of greater value to rural than to urban educators. A most important question in relation thereto, however, is where should such persons study. Probably some should go to Denmark, or the other Scandinavian countries where folk schools have been developed. Probably others would learn much by the right kind of field trips to various parts of the United States, observing varieties of programs already under way. Probably small seminars and institutes for professional workers, in session for short periods, could be arranged in the various regions of the United States, which would be as valuable as any formal study. At least they would provide opportunity for educators to educate one another. Formal graduate study or leave for pursuit of a research project would meet the needs of others. The essential seems to be a modest but systematic program which will permit considerable diversity in method.

5. *The formation of county committees of adult education for studying needs and planning.* Our suggestion here is for nothing formidable, rather for something altogether simple and informal. It is perhaps so simple that it has not been done and will not be done in most instances. We suggest that the county superintendent of schools, the county agricultural agent, the home demonstration agent, the county librarian, the supervisor of rural schools, and others having somewhat similar or related professional in-

terests, meet in one or two counties per state and form themselves into a county committee of adult education. Further, that they meet regularly six to eight times a year for several years to consider the activities going on, the outstanding educational needs of the adults of the county, the possibilities of making further progress in meeting the needs. That they keep careful records of their deliberations. That they invite representatives of state departments of education, of other state departments, of state organizations to meet with them for purposes of consultation. That they consider adding to their numbers in a deliberate fashion other professional and lay persons who have an interest in some forms of adult education, for example social workers, clergymen, officers of women's organizations. That they consider the advisability of holding occasional public meetings or county conferences of lay and professional persons on some aspects of adult education. That they make if possible, or have made, a systematic study of adult education in the county. That they serve as a clearing house and a point of contact with state and national agencies interested in adult education.

In this connection we list typical organizations in counties which we have found to have adult education activities, and typical activities of the organizations:

TYPICAL COUNTY AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS WHICH MAY HAVE  
ADULT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

County Libraries

Town Libraries

High Schools and Consolidated Schools

Parent-Teacher Associations and Other Parent Education  
Groups

Extension Service Groups

Agriculture

Home Economics

4-H Clubs (adult as far as leader-training is concerned)

Women's Clubs

Associations of University Women

Leagues of Women Voters  
Community Clubs  
Farmers' and Farm Women's Clubs  
Luncheon Clubs  
Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce  
Ministers' Associations and Churches  
Laymen's Leagues, Brotherhoods and Church Auxiliaries  
Y.M.C.A.; Y.W.C.A.; Y.M.H.A.; Y.W.H.A.; K.C.  
Farm and Home Bureaus  
Granges  
County and Town Park Boards  
Historical Societies  
Museums  
Press

TYPICAL ADULT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE FOREGOING  
ORGANIZATIONS, OF INDIVIDUALS, AND OF SPECIAL-  
INTEREST GROUPS

Establishing and Supporting Local Branches of the County  
Library by:

Publicity

Displaying and loaning books at meetings

Gifts of books by organizations to library

Mobilizing magazines for circulation through local library

Mobilizing books for circulation through local library

Assisting in locating library and librarian service

Reading-courses or reading-circles

Concerts by

Community Chorus

Community Orchestra

Community Band

Correspondence courses

Self-Study by organizations

Discussion-groups for course-study

Forums

Lectures and lecture courses

Extension classes, probably around teacher groups, but with  
effort to secure courses of interest to others also

Community self-analysis and scoring

Dramatics

Pageants

Parental education in various forms

Health-demonstrations and clinics

6. *More contacts and planning on a state basis.* Here it is that contacts between rural and urban adult educators can be most frequently and systematically promoted. Here, too, can be a good meeting ground for representatives of voluntary and governmental agencies. Here, too, in addition to the county, there is at least the prospect of improving relationships between agencies and between individual workers.

Coöperative activities in adult education on a state basis are already with us and offer much to rural educators. An example is the publication by the Massachusetts Commission on the Enrichment of Adult Life, Boston, of a pamphlet by William F. Stearns entitled *Adult Education in Massachusetts*, being a preliminary survey of opportunities and needs. Studies of this type are of use to rural as well as urban educators.

State associations or councils of adult education are also beginning to appear, and rural workers should coöperate in them. The Minnesota Council for Adult Education has held three annual state conferences. Membership in the council is "open to individuals and to representatives of or delegates from non-profit making organizations and institutions interested in adult education." The purposes of the Council are: "To stimulate interest in adult education; to aid in coördinating adult education activities and to give publicity to educational opportunities for adults; to advise with organizations, agencies, and individuals interested in adult education; to assist in making plans for supplementing and enriching existing adult education programs; to assist in initiating and promoting new adult education activities; to coöperate with local, state, national and international associations for adult education." Rural adult educators have a stake in efforts of this sort.

We give below a list of state organizations and institutions which we have found interested in rural adult education:

TYPICAL STATE ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH RURAL  
ADULT EDUCATION

State University  
State College of Agriculture  
State Teachers' Colleges  
State Department of Education  
State Department of Public Health  
State Department of Welfare  
State Library Commission  
State Library Association  
State Teachers' Association  
Private Colleges  
State Conference of Social Workers  
Y.M.C.A.  
Y.W.C.A.  
State Council of Churches  
State Council of Religious Education  
State Federation of Women's Clubs  
State Parent-Teachers' Association  
American Association of University Women  
State League of Women Voters  
State Farm Bureau  
State Grange  
State Press Association

7. *More systematic national guidance and consideration.* Particularly does there seem to be need for more frequent opportunities for critical considerations of needs, problems, methods and objectives by those most concerned about the improvement of rural adult education throughout the country. There are all sorts of national meetings where those with a particular interest meet. For example, many of those interested in parent education attend the National Congress of Parents and Teachers; agricultural extension workers have an annual meeting place in the As-

sociation of Land Grant Colleges and Universities. The two national associations which cut across special interests and bring together a variety of workers are the American Association for Adult Education and the American Country Life Association. The latter held its 1932 annual meeting on the topic of "Adult Education and Rural Life." The American Association for Adult Education is a clearing house for information in adult education; the American Country Life Association is a clearing house for information on rural affairs, including education. It seems that these two associations are in the best position to encourage better thinking and planning on a national scale. The Adult Education Association meets annually in the spring, the Country Life Association in the fall. By improvement of the discussions of rural adult education at their annual meetings, by systematic publication in their journals, along with ordinary coöperation between the Associations, much can be done.

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In conclusion, adult education in rural America needs to recognize more fully its kinship with movements in urban America and in rural and urban groups of other countries. It has been demonstrated already that the facts and philosophies which underlie the whole adult education movement have significance for the people who live in the villages and on the farms of the United States. The educational forces now at work in rural America, although they are as yet inadequate to reach more than a minority of the people, are great in number. Some enterprises, as we have seen, are far-reaching in organization.

It is essential to realize the great variety of the organizations and institutions already carrying on activities; and that adults in rural areas have already shown a commendable response to the programs which are in operation. Although the movements which have stressed vocational ef-

ficiency are the most widespread, the need is not for less emphasis on vocational interests, but for relatively more emphasis upon the broadly humanistic and cultural experiences and resources of the race. For farmers and village dwellers are as other men and are as interested in the cultural values of civilization as urban groups generally.

The pressing need is not for more organizations, but rather for the improvement of existing services and for a much closer association of interested individuals, groups, and agencies. Those who are already at work must find ways to evaluate experience together, to discuss their goals together. Furthermore, we must all be zealous to encourage and safeguard spontaneous local educational efforts. Among rural people, native efforts are frequently ingenious. To a considerable degree, adult education is self-education. If we are only skillful enough to discover and direct the interests which already exist among the people, the future of adult education in rural America is assured.

As we close this book, it is a time of drastic readjustments—social, economic, intellectual. For rural America, no less than for urban America, it is a time of confusion of values. Urban America does not particularly need to adjust to rural America, but rural America must adjust to urban America, as well as cope with its own situation. Adult education is clearly an instrument of personal and social adjustment, and a means of use to men and women who must search for new values—economic, social, intellectual, and spiritual. In these functions of adult education will perhaps be found its main reason for being and its chief significance.

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